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NESS AND LOVE

By Hugues Le Roux



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Business and Love

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By

Hugues Le Roux

Author of "Menelik et Nous," etc.

New York

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Business and Love

Chapter I

MEMORIES OF PARIS

IT is just four days since I left Paris. In another three or four days, unless we break a screw or are run down by a ship *en route*, we shall land in New York. I shall don once more my evening clothes and my white cravat. Thanks to the rapidity of modern travel, I can almost fancy that I have only been taking a prolonged nap between two evening entertainments. To sleep and to dream — I find nothing better than this, as the little curtains of my berth swing back and forth on the iron rod, and every few seconds a wave, a big winter wave, dense and black, dashes against the port-hole and plunges the cabin into darkness.

With my eyes thus half shut, I invoke among my memories the last evening spent in Paris.

I was dining out that night in one of the thoroughly French houses whose doors do not open to the rich or the titled unless these have personal merit back of them. Heaven be praised, in the great beehive, Paris, there are many such cells, and there will always be; but the foreigners who visit Paris know nothing about them.

They are a sort of masonic lodge: one cannot enter without having passed through the various stages of initiation — which takes a long time. You must not only understand French and speak it without effort, but, what is more difficult, you must think as a French person does, admit our opinions and our prejudices, give up what is striking in your own individuality in order to relish the joy of a conversation among truly cultured people. Very few foreigners are willing to make the sacrifice this entails. Yet it is as indispensable as to exact from the musicians of an orchestra that their instruments be in perfect tune. All the world over I have met the virtuoso who, before a speechless audience, was able to execute a brilliant piece

with variations; every country has its eloquent men to whom one listens with pleasure. But the eloquent man is not the same as the man who knows how to talk. Conversation, *la causerie*, is an intellectual sport. Control, self-sacrifice are quite as important for this kind of sport as for a game of foot-ball. I have never seen any people except Anglo-Saxons, Americans, or English, who were able to sacrifice everything — egoism, pride, personality, temperament, all — for a glorious game of foot-ball. I have never seen any people except French and Italians capable of putting the same restraint upon themselves in order to play dextrously in a salon the incomparable game of general conversation.

And how carefully the dear old friend who was giving the farewell dinner in my honour had picked out her guests! A dozen in all, not more nor less. This is exactly the right number if you wish to extend the circle of strictest intimacy and keep up without effort a *causerie* in which every one takes part. The men and women who were there

seemed exactly suited to each other. They felt no need of beginning the dinner with champagne in order to rouse themselves out of indifference or timidity. They came, and they brought with them their charming intellects like so many instruments tuned in advance to a given key. Upon every essential subject they were sure to agree. I mean upon religion, politics, the social intercourse between man and woman. They had no intention of attacking the foundations of faith, society, and happiness; they meant merely to touch lightly the summits, to exchange with utmost refinement their slight differences of opinion. And it was a joy to the amateur to hear — may I say? — this chamber music, conducted without apparent effort by the hostess. She drew out one, and tactfully silenced another when she felt that a subject had been carried far enough and that with a few words more it might become commonplace or dangerous. Now it was a woman's soprano — forgive me — a woman's sentiment, that was lacking; again, it was a weightier and more serious opinion

of some member of the Institute; or again, the approving chorus of *Monsieur Tout le Monde.* There was delicacy, fire, brilliancy throughout, because of the *esprit* with which all was handled, the grace with which one motive was merged into another.

A hostess who receives in this way is not merely the owner of the house where the concert is given; she is the leader of an orchestra; she directs everything, music and score, from the tip of her baton.

I noticed, and not for the first time, how absolutely in harmony with true womanliness was the attitude of the Parisian woman toward man. Even supposing that certain among them had received a masculine education, they did not for a moment doubt that the exercise of a profession, the supervision of public affairs, had given the man an experience which they valued, and which they could not themselves possess. There is only one case where they interrupted animatedly, — when man's natural selfishness pictured a world where he appeared in altogether too favourable a light without making

the proper allowance for woman's inherent refinement.

It must, moreover, be admitted that the companionship of man is indispensable to the French woman. She does not aspire to be a perfect human being, sufficient unto herself. She is the mate, the other half, of man, — of his heart and of his mind. She wants near her this masculine element that makes life complete. It would be unjust to say that she demands to be continually courted. France is one of the countries where people flirt the least; for us there are two domains, love and conversation. The exchange of ideas with a woman, *tête-à-tête*, is the greatest possible pleasure. The most intelligent man lends to it the same close attention a tennis champion gives to a game played against an alert and skilful young woman.

The enjoyment which the men and women of our country find in each other's society was brought agreeably to mind the other night. They sent for us in the smoking-room, soon after dinner, saying that it was not in accord-

ance with good French traditions to be so absorbed in cigars and the conversation of the ugly sex!

"If you have anything interesting to say," the hostess declared with an amiable smile, "we women want to hear what it is; if you were telling stories that can only be heard by men, please keep them for some other occasion."

During our short absence the salon had filled up, — married couples, bachelors, married men without their wives, an occasional widow, no young women without their husbands, and practically no divorcees.

It is not only the young man recently married to a beautiful young woman, whom he enjoys trailing after amid the murmur of admiration she awakens, who goes out with his wife in society; certain very old couples who have traversed half their lives side by side, still delight in worldly festivities, still like returning home together in their comfortable coupé, and the chance this moment gives a busy man to talk with his wife about all sorts of things, domestic,

social, intimate, or professional, free from intruders.

On the other hand, the bachelor is a favourite among those who entertain; he occupies only one place at table, and does not impose upon people a better half who may be less agreeable than he. In a case where limited means prevent a couple from going into the expenditure which a very worldly existence necessitates, the woman sacrifices herself. She knows that her ball gowns, and the carriages she must have to wear them, weigh upon the conjugal budget more heavily than the evening dress in which a man goes out. She cannot deprive her husband of the social advantages to be obtained through contact with the world. So it is one meets, in our Parisian salons, quantities of married men whose wives are not present. What one never sees is the woman alone.

The young widow remains at home. The older widow generally withdraws to the family circle. If her fortune is large, if her position has been an important one, she entertains and goes out some, but very dis-

creetly; she keeps up her former friends; she seldom enters into a new set, — she would not be welcome.

The divorced woman is even rarer in society than the widow. Certain very Catholic salons are closed to her entirely. The purely fashionable look at her askance. Religious prejudices go hand in hand with the interests of society.

The world does not set itself up as judge between the husband and wife. So long as the couple seem united it is as tolerant as they for any shortcomings it may suspect. What it cannot forgive is that they should no longer get on together, and that, by divorcing, they oblige all those who have accepted them in society to make a choice between them. Society, which places above everything else the harmony of social intercourse, is pitiless for those who disturb this harmony by a discordant note. The woman who after her divorce marries again receives no more cordial welcome. In a *milieu* made up of subtleties people do not wish to expose themselves to such an outrageous spec-

tacle as two husbands of the same woman meeting accidentally in a salon where the woman herself chances to be. To this severity I have seen exceptions made — oh, how rarely — under one condition only: when the divorce has been decreed against the husband, when the husband has been so unfaithful that public opinion has been unanimous in denouncing him, when he has disappeared after the incident, and, finally, when the divorcee has not remarried.

What, for example, one never meets in society are the — we have no name for them in France — those who are no longer young girls and who are not yet old maids. French society does not admit the existence of the unmarried woman, it is impossible for her to penetrate anywhere. Our reasons for this are good, and in accordance with all our customs, intellectual, sentimental, and moral.

And even looking at it in the simplest way, if she, who is neither wife nor widow nor divorcee, were not considered an anomaly to be avoided, she would still remain the

grain of sand which interrupts the movements of an entire machine.

Our fondness for general conversation, for this intellectual sport where the woman responds to the man, has created in the French language certain subtleties which elsewhere have no equivalent. It is an accepted fact with us that a well-bred man can talk with a well-bred woman upon any subject whatever, without shocking her. In order to realise that this freedom is a privilege, you have only to see what a French love story becomes when translated into another language.

And having this privilege, we make use of it. The French, who in this respect recognise their own virtuosity, profit by it to talk with the *abandon* which alone can give grace and force to a conversation. But how would it be possible to broach, for example, the questions of the relations, moral and otherwise, in the love that exists between a man and a woman, before people who have neither the right to understand nor the possibility for understanding what love really is? Shall an age be set after which

it is taken for granted that the unmarried woman knows all there is to know about life? At what minute shall this time limit be fixed?

One of the chief qualities of the French is common-sense. Common-sense is the mainstay of our whole classic literature. You find it at the root of our national institutions; it is the woof and warp of our customs. This same common-sense does not admit that a place shall be given in society to a woman who has no place in life.

Chapter II

FIFTH AVENUE

HERE and there, in Paris, I have American friends whose friendship is very dear to me. They have lived for long periods in France and in Italy. They have the two native qualities which make their society singularly interesting in a *tête-à-tête:* first, the passion for seeing things, knowing about them, and admiring them, which suggests in a delicious way the youthfulness of a people; next, an originality in their opinions which excites the curiosity and rouses the wits like the new arrangement of an old dish.

It is a great advantage to be young, and often a charm to be original, but the young should never forget that those who have reached maturity were young in turn before them, that they know all the impressions, all the enthusiasms of youth and others that

youth does not know; and people who hold their own opinions without knowing those of the gallery, without comparing these to their own, should always remember that a certain common bond, let us call it good taste, unites, in all essential things, the beliefs of intelligent and cultured people. It is with this reserve that originality and animation of thought acquire their full value. In the measure of good taste only, can they be brought into general conversation as an interesting contribution. Without this sacrifice of the individual to the feelings of others, all conversation at a dinner or in a salon, is impossible. Ideas, instead of being linked one with another, clash against each other, and are sent hither and thither like balls on a billiard table, putting an end to social enjoyment.

My American friends on the continent had given me precious letters of introduction for their country. They had told me that I was sure to be charmed with the generous and big character of American hospitality. I was not disappointed in my

anticipations: before I had even landed cordial invitations awaited the arrival of the ship and my gratitude is keen.

As I wish to have my first impressions typical, I am dining to-night in Fifth Avenue near Central Park, at the house of a stock broker who is a man well known and highly esteemed by every one in New York. I shall have plenty of chances to see the university centres, and naturally to go among the cosmopolitan Americans whom I have known in Paris. Both, to my thinking, have been transformed by travel and culture. I wish to make my *début* in New York Society among the rich and fashionable set as I would wish to be received, if I were a foreigner passing through Paris, by the worldly or literary people.

A presentation of this kind is, in France, a small ceremony carefully thought out. The hostess has taken the trouble to inform herself as to some incident in your life of which you are proud. If you are a writer she recalls having read one of your books, which naturally, she enjoyed. She will at least

know the title of some work of yours. If you have never done anything, — anything remarkable in the least way whatever of which she can speak at once in order to show in a kindly manner the pleasure she feels at receiving so distinguished a guest, — the custom is to make some pleasant remark about the mutual friend who has brought you together.

The very beautiful hostess who greeted me that night at the threshold of a New York salon in Fifth Avenue, received me with a mixture of cordiality and chilliness which was new to me. One would have thought that we had known each other a long time, but that our acquaintance had been purely formal without the slightest intimacy. I, however, noticed that Mrs. H—— received all her guests in about the same way, so I, concluded that it was the "style," and not that she had taken a dislike to me before I opened my mouth.

I glanced about to find the husband, and some one said:

"Where is H——?"

The hostess smiled mysteriously, and in her smile there was a charm which her habitual coldness certainly lacked.

" He is working for you . . . he is making cocktails."

The last guests had meanwhile arrived. Among twelve in all I noticed that there were four unmarried women. Not the old-maid of France who has taken the veil of Saint Catherine because her father could not give her a *dot* and she did not have the good looks which lead to a love match. The entrance of such into any company, even the family circle, is trying for every one, even the old maids themselves who seem apologetic for attracting the attention of people who must ignore them as far as possible. They do not feel at ease until they have again joined a group where they pass unnoticed.

Nothing, on the contrary, either in appearance or manner, was an indication to me whether the fine-looking creatures who came into this American salon were young girls or married women.

I could not distinguish a maiden from a matron either by a girlish slenderness or by a matronly *embonpoint*. There was neither more nor less innocence or decision on one of their faces than on another. Since then I have often met in America married women who looked like young girls, just as these young girls looked like married women. They had on jewels such as in Paris the husband gives his wife on her wedding day. They varied, the four of them, between twenty-three and thirty years of age, yet they were dressed in velvets and satins, which on the other side of the water are reserved for women of forty.

The mothers and fathers of these brilliant misses did not of course accompany them. It seemed to me that far from obliterating themselves after their entry, as young French girls would have done, they were inclined to demand more attention, to displace more air, than the married women.

Mr. H—— meanwhile had finished making the cocktails. In the midst of compliments showered upon him for his skill I

had barely time to shake hands with the host before we passed into the dining-room.

A glance at the way people are seated at table in all countries is an indication of the consideration the host and hostess wish to show each guest. It was evidently in my honour the dinner was given, since I was at the right of the hostess. I looked to see which of the women had been given the corresponding place by the host, and what was my astonishment on observing that Mr. H—— had put at his right, not the married woman who, because of her age or her social position was first in importance, but one of the young girls of twenty-five whom I had seen arriving alone.

I knew that Mr. H—— had a reputation for being good-natured and witty; I hoped that he would take possession of the conversation, start the ball rolling. He did nothing of the kind. When the champagne glasses had been twice filled, the conversation which each person was having with his neighbour grew more and more ani-

mated, producing a general hubbub, loud and certainly confusing. The only intervention on the part of the hostess in this bedlam was limited to an indication as to when we should stop talking to our right-hand neighbour and begin talking to the guest on our left. She suddenly abandoned the person to whom she had been giving her attention for some minutes, and turned toward the man who was dining next her, on the other side. At the same moment all the feminine profiles, classic or otherwise, followed the same movement of distributive justice. So much the worse if the conversation or rather the sentence one had begun was, by this "right about face," broken off short.

It was with the humble servant at her right that Mrs. H—— deigned to resume the swing of the *causerie*.

I thanked her for the honour she and her husband had conferred upon me. I told her how much I had heard about her husband's gift for making speeches. She smiled again and said:

"He is so good! but he is so overworked. He says he is killing himself, and I believe he is right."

"Can't you urge him to take a rest?"

She looked at me with an expression of slight surprise, mingled certainly with scorn, — such an expression as one might see on the face of a French woman, the wife of an officer who was about to start off on some Colonial expedition and to whom a *bourgeois* might say: "But why do you let him go?" All she said was:

"How can I stop him! He is so successful!" She added in an undertone, as though to herself: "Heaven grant that it may keep up."

As she talked she glanced toward her husband, and in her eyes there were shades of expression worth noting: an almost maternal feeling of protection, a slight touch of defiant superiority, and something the same sort of tenderness with which the owner of a brilliant yearling supervises the exercises of a colt who gives great cause for promise.

Suddenly she said:

"I spoil him so terribly! . . . Do you know the game we call squash?"

"I don't play it, but I know what you mean —"

"I had a squash court built on the roof for my husband, a surprise for his birthday. . . . He did n't suspect anything at all! And he was so delighted. Every afternoon he brings up several friends from the office for a game of squash. . . . It's done wonders for his health, . . . and that is so important for his business."

My hearing was up. The fine profile turned toward the right-hand neighbour, the tip of my obedient nose toward the neighbour on my left. I could not remember at all whether this amiable person had been announced as Mrs. or Miss; it was quite possible that one of the numerous rings on her fingers was a wedding ring. Her way of dressing gave no indication, and neither did her expression. I thought, with my French ideas, that I would be more polite if I called her Madame, so I

started out by complimenting her on her French.

She did not take advantage of this to ask for the latest news of France, which she had undoubtedly visited. My right-hand neighbour had asked me if I knew how to play squash, my left-hand neighbour asked me if I knew how to play bridge.

"They tell me," she said, "that I have a special talent for bridge."

"And you are cultivating it?"

"Of course, I am taking lessons now every afternoon."

"Are there bridge professors?"

"Very good ones; they charge ten dollars an hour. You ought to profit by your stay in New York to take a few lessons."

"I never touch cards."

"Really? What a miserable old age you are preparing for yourself."

There was no reason why a conversation that had started off so well should not become very absorbing. Unfortunately Mrs. H—— gave the signal to rise.

As the men were starting toward the smok-

ing-room, the pretty bridge-player said to me:

"The French people are undoubtedly very well bred. Why is it, then, that they persist in calling every woman they meet in a salon *Madame* whether she is married or not?"

"Mon Dieu, Madame . . ."

"Miss, if you please."

"Eh bien, Mademoiselle."

"There are certain hotels in Switzerland and Italy where you cannot go and take a maid without being dubbed Baroness at least. In France if you are over twenty-five, if you are not a monstrosity, if you look like a woman of the world, people cannot accept the idea of your not being married. It is an oversight they cannot contemplate, they call you 'Madame' it would seem by way of charity or as a reproach. Is it so very improper to be unmarried in France? A sort of blight? What!"

Already they were getting ready the card tables. I answered: "I cannot, Mademoiselle, respond in a word. I should have to

write the summing up of history, a *résumé* of civilisation from the days of the patriarchs to the twentieth century to answer you."

"Write it, do please! It will be just the thing! I am going off to the country for a week, it is sure to rain, I shan't be able to skate, and I shall be horribly bored. I shall have time to weigh your reasons, which must be bad, and when I come back I will tell you mine, which are good."

With this she gave me her country and town addresses, then, as it was her turn to take a hand at the card table, she left me without even waiting my promise.

Chapter III

CONSENSUS POPULI

To Miss R. *at Tuxedo*

I TOOK your request of the other night seriously, you see, Mademoiselle, and at the risk of being only half read, I am sitting down now at my table to write out the notes over which you can have the pleasure of yawning in case the rain puts an end to the skating party.

I appreciate your hatred for the rain, so I will not go back as far as the flood, but, with your permission we will begin with the days of Abraham.

His life and that of his wife Sarah do not appear to you simply as a beautiful pastoral. Your ancestors, the Puritans, and you their grand-child — with your special talent for bridge — have always sought moral instruction in the Bible stories. You consider them

not only marvellously poetic but written under divine inspiration.

So I teach you nothing new when I tell you that throughout the Old Testament there sounds the long lamentation of the barren woman. She appeals to God in every tone of reproach and sorrow:

"Why have you sent this affliction upon me?"

She knows that God has said to His people:

"Increase and multiply."

She asks herself what wrong she can have committed to be thus placed beyond the limits of the Promise, and, although her barrenness is involuntary, her head bows down under the abuse of those who say, as she passes:

"The curse of God is upon her!"

If from Judea you cross over to India, you find in the oldest religion of the world, an even more marked belief that woman has been placed upon the earth to atone by a fruitful love for the ravages of death. There is a certain very ancient sect who would fear

to outrage the Power that has made the world, and to merit punishment, if they allowed a single young girl, capable of becoming a wife, to return unmarried to her Creator. So they have founded a college of priests whose dreary mission is to wed the virgins whom death has claimed before their destiny as women and as mothers has been fulfilled upon the earth. You would not forgive me if for a moment I caused your mind to dwell upon such funereal thoughts; but we are seeking the truth together, and India, like Israel, gives the answer:

"Woman's submission to the Divine plan is through maternity."

The same truth shines forth under the brilliant sky of Greece.

You have perhaps read the originals — your country-women are so learned — at least you know the translations of the Greek masterpieces among the tragedies of antiquity. You have heard the sorrowful confidences made to the chorus by the daughters of vanquished kings, Trojan

maidens, the sisters of Eteocles, of Polynice, of Orestes, the Alcestis, the Antigones, the Electras. For them the most awful affliction is not being forced to share the couch of a victor: a dignity still remains to the woman in slavish maternity, even though the father of her son has been the murderer of her parents. The unbearable trial, which shatters as a fall does the beautiful marble figures, is the thought that they may not find a husband. Not a chosen husband, a Pyrrhus preferred by the ungrateful Hermione to an Orestes, but any husband no matter which, who will lift the maiden out of this shame: the barrenness of her womb.

Greece enamoured by beauty, Judea tortured by conscientious scruples, the blessed spirit whose entire creation is a pæan to life, and the Prophet covered with ashes, who from beginning to end varies his sorrowful melody to a unique theme: O God, why was I born! — both are agreed that the primordial duty of man and woman towards God or the gods is the propagation of life.

The fact that Rome should have supported a college for vestals, and should have conferred privileges upon it, does not alter the principle of ancient morals. You know, Mademoiselle, that Madame de Staël one day asked Napoleon: "What woman, Sire, do you place above all others in your Kingdom?" She evidently expected him to say: "You, Madame," for she had a well-justified opinion regarding the superiority of her mind. Napoleon answered, "The woman who has the greatest number of children, Madame." . . . Will you turn up your nose at this, Mademoiselle, saying it is the rather coarse response of a conqueror? But the Romans were a people of conquerors, who, before Napoleon, before the Anglo-Saxon race, before Monroe, aspired to the domination of the world. Roman law, Roman morals, could not engender an opinion contrary to Napoleon's with regard to woman. The entire Roman civilisation is dominated by the statue of a woman who clasps her two sons to her heart; above is graven this inscription: "Cornelia, mother of the Gracchi."

Under the shadow of this marble group the vestals have about as much importance in history as the sacred chickens. Neither more nor less.

And, moreover, it was not for selfish reasons, not for a personal motive, that the vestals dedicated themselves to celibacy. They were attached to the City just as virgins were whom the vanquished offered to the Minotaur in mythological days, victims to be deplored. It is on this principle of sacrificing the individual to his neighbour's sufferings, of appeasing a god outraged by non-believers that Christianity has so far uplifted the ideal of virginity. I use the word virginity, not celibacy. In every language at all times, in all countries, it would be hypocritical to affirm that the two terms mean the same thing. In the first place the Christian celibacy implies retirement into a cloister, as an embargo placed by the Master who commanded: "Lest ye fall into temptation." Finally, even supposing that the mystic celibacy of man, guarded and ensured, seemed profitable in a time

when everything, civilisation, thought, science, moral and religious standards, respect for the human being, for life itself had to be rescued from increasing barbarity, the doctrine of Christianity still remains the social, human and divine truth which the Apostle Paul formulated at the start. You surely read the Epistles of Saint Paul, Mademoiselle, and you must often have dwelt upon this text which I shall once more offer you for meditation:

"I will therefore that the younger women marry, bear children, guide the house."[1]

I have just returned, Mademoiselle, from an almost unknown country whose civilisation offers to the historian this exceptional interest; it received the Gospel and baptism long before France, long before America, about the fourth century B. C.

The country of which I speak is Abyssinia, its geographical position between the swamp of the Nile and the deserts of the Red Sea, on a mountainous height equal to the Swiss altitudes, has placed this country, for over

[1] 1 Timothy, v. 14.

a thousand years, beyond the reach of Mussulman invasions. The Greco-Roman customs, the code of Justinian, the habits of primitive Christendom, have been kept intact in their pristine freshness, for centuries, like so many rare things in a museum. The position of woman in Abyssinia to-day represents the life of the Christian woman in the time of the Catacombs.

The young girl is never seen, not that she have, as in Mussulman countries, a veil drawn over her face, but because modesty forbids that a young girl, who is one day to be married by an honest man, shall first have been desired by many. Married, she does not permit herself long journeys which would give people a chance to see her. The young girls, and women of the world on their way to the palace of the empress, surrounded by a throng of soldiers forming an especial guard, always have their faces carefully enveloped in transparent veils. A chankalla negro shelters them with a parasol and, as though the muslin in which they are swathed did not suffice to conceal them from the

public gaze, when you chance to pass by the side of the mules, the black slave lowers his parasol so that the whole figure is hidden. I asked an old Abyssinian priest, confessor of one of the native chiefs, what the reason was for the custom.

"Are the parents, the *fiancés*, and the husbands here as jealous, father, as the Mussulmans?"

He shook his head.

"Christian men," he said, "should not take such humiliating precautions with regard to Christian women, but we know it has been written: 'The spirit is willing, the flesh is weak,' and also: 'Lead us not into temptation.'"

The young girls and women think that their beauty might awaken desire in the men who meet them, and jealousy in the women who have not been equally favoured by fate. They do not wish to be the cause of their neighbours' transgression, so, when they are absolutely obliged to leave their houses, they hide themselves from sight. A woman, especially a woman who is not

married, and who might awaken the covetous glances of all, should pass unseen.

They do not admit, that, divorced or widowed, a Christian shall present to Abyssinians the scandalous spectacle of *a woman who goes out alone in society*. So they have settled the young girl's interests once for all before marriage, in order to spare her later the excuse for wandering at large under a pretext of earning a living by work of some sort. The *fiancé* who takes a young Abyssinian to be his wife deposits in her father's hands a sum of money which is sometimes large. It is not purchase money, for the father may not dispose of the capital. It is merely entrusted to him and he must deliver it over to his daughter should she be divorced.

When is the best time to think of putting aside for the divorcee an income that will permit her to live suitably in the retirement her position without a husband will demand? Is it at the moment of hatred and strife? "No," say the Abyssinian jurisconsuls, "it is at the moment when all is love."

As for the widows, when they live truly in accordance with primitive Christian traditions, they wear a veil which makes them look like nuns. They no longer leave their houses, except to visit the poor or go to church, they model their lives after the holy women in the Gospel, seen only on the road to Calvary or to the sepulchre.

The wish to keep out of every-day life the woman, who, for one reason or another, has not married, obliges the Abyssinian servants to follow a trying custom. They must have their heads shaved, like nuns, nothing must remain of the charm or the beauty which is the essence of womanly grace and which might make them an object for man to desire. The "third sex" must be ugly, everything attractive about it must have been eliminated before Christian morals and the morals of society can let it loose, without risk, on the highways of the world. I beg of you, Mademoiselle, to note in passing that the good housekeepers in our country and in your own, who make their servants wear caps, and

forbid them to dress their hair in a way flattering to their type of beauty, or at least to the youth and womanliness of their countenances, perpetuate unconsciously the Christian tradition. They share in this matter the anxiety of a certain father of the church, who said:

"Woman's hair is an object of continual temptation and abomination, a nest of vipers."

What would this venerable ancestor of your Puritan forefathers have said, dear Mademoiselle, if he had appeared, at the threshold of Madame H——'s dining-room, and had caught sight of the brilliant aigrette offset with diamonds that glittered in the knowing waves of your hair, freshly curled by a very skilful hairdresser?

This story of the prejudices held by all the civilisations in the world with regard to unmarried women I should continue by a little visit to the tent or the *gourbi* of the Arabs. I could tell you about many a poor family on the Algerian table-lands and in the Sahara, families whose lives I

have shared; I could picture to you these *smalas* where, around a meagre dish of *couscous*, are grouped the widows, the divorcees and the old women, those who have been abandoned. I don't even mention the young girls, deserted, in order to spare the family this dishonour: a woman or a girl of its own blood at large in the world without a husband who can answer for her. But truly, I am afraid I have given you cause for mirth by taking so very seriously a wish that you expressed with perhaps no other desire than to rid yourself of a Frenchman who calls all unmarried women he meets, "Madame," and who dares present himself in society without even suspecting that the first thing required of him will be to play bridge.

Chapter IV

DAUGHTERS OF FRANCE

CONTRARY to my expectations I have received from Miss R—— a very kind note. She declares that she wants the rest of my "continued story," she reminds me that I promised to call upon her.

To-day at five o'clock I respond to her amiable invitation with great pleasure.

I am led into a very fine drawing-room. I examine it with interest while the man-servant goes to announce me. One thing astonishes me; as a matter of fact I know no more about this charming person who has invited me to come and talk *tête-à-tête* with her, than though we had picked up a chance acquaintance on a Pullman car.

Does she live alone or with her parents? Are her parents dead? Are they alive? If so, shall I see them?

I vaguely remember that the young lady has been around the world. In the salon there are traces of her cosmopolitan curiosity, shall I say there are too many traces? The desire she had to do "differently" from the way they do elsewhere, is the only definite impression one gathers from the heaps of stuffs, of vases, of portières, of furniture, and of rugs which, taken separately, are beautiful, but which swear somewhat at each other in this pell-mell presentation.

In France, a worthy and monotonous tradition turns out thousands of *bourgeois* salons exactly alike; the principal pieces of furniture are assigned to fixed spots. This tradition has for origin the same reason which accounts for the presence of a large reception-room in the centre of the house. It is not merely for the purpose of eating that French people get together, but in order to exchange ideas and sentiments. And so the drawing-room is always arranged in about the same way, like a scene on the stage, with an idea to making general conversation easy for all those who are present.

The salon where Miss R—— receives had made no preparation for this sort of conversation, it is a combination of card-room and boudoir; the right side seems dedicated to the God here worshipped, that is, bridge; the left side seems reserved for a more delicate ceremony, which no doubt is the adoration of Miss R—— herself.

Between these two shrines the tea-table is spread like a familiar and portable altar.

"Do you take tea? . . . with cream? . . . with milk? . . . with lemon? . . . with sugar? . . . no sugar? . . ."

It is really not worth while for Miss R—— and me to be two fairly intelligent people who have seen a good portion of the world, who have different ways of looking at the same subjects, but who both of us are thinking people, all this is hardly worth while if we are to drag out indefinitely the formality with regard to tea and the dispensing of it, as they do in an English novel. It would seem, I give you my word, as though the tea-table, like the card-table, were an excuse for spending one's time saying nothing.

They play at taking tea as they play bridge, as they play squash; the people of ordinary intelligence, because they truly have nothing to say, and the learned, original, superior people, so numerous in the centres where I have been living for several weeks past, because they have taught themselves all sorts of sciences, arts and games, except the most civilised of all arts: that of expressing one's ideas in a general conversation.

At the risk of once more seeming ignorant of the proper custom, I swallow my cup of tea at a gulp, boiling hot as it is; and I put the cup back on the tray, assure Miss R—— I don't want a second, and resolutely I make my way towards the left, by the alley of porcelains, delicious and ill-sorted, at the end of which I shall at last be able to contemplate, not a gracious or anonymous priestess devoted to the service of a silver tea kettle, but a well-balanced woman, whose opinions, whose ways of feeling things interest me intensely.

Without further ado I come at once to the point of my visit:

"Have you lived a long time in France, Miss R——?"

"No, I have been to Paris several times, but only to visit it, never to live there."

"Where did you learn French then?"

"In Lausanne, where I was at boarding-school for several years."

"That was a pity. You have learned the French grammar perfectly, without penetrating at all the character of the language itself. And this would have been the most profitable outcome to be obtained by the comparison of one civilisation with another."

"But Switzerland is a Protestant country and we Puritans have a preconceived prejudice against the Catholic people. We might return home with ideas too contrary to those that govern society in our country."

"I don't mean that you should have shut yourself up in one of the Parisian convents where the young girls of the French nobility are educated. You are not destined to lead the lives they do, and moreover it does not seem to me that the convent education is good even for the modern French girl.

Madame de Sévigné, who was not in the least degree an ungodly woman, wrote, in the middle of the seventeenth century: 'It is impossible to obtain any sort of education in a convent, either on religious subjects, about which the sisters know very little, or any subject whatever.'

"You see that I am not a missionary in disguise trying to convert you to Catholicism. The various religions seem to me human points of view whence the different nations perceive the divinity. Rest assured I admire in full measure the introspective spirit which has been so powerful in developing the individual initiative among Anglo-Saxon races. At the same time I see the disadvantages of it, they are anti-familial, they prevent a race from becoming a nation. I wish that my countrymen might borrow from the moral training of your country some of its taste for initiative, and, on the other hand, in my genuine affection for your young America, made up of such sundry and divers elements, constantly modified by immigration, and prevented, for this reason,

from becoming a 'race,' I wish that the young girls and young men in America might come to France and see something of what Catholic education has done with all the different elements which settled ancient Gaul. How it has made what you Americans yourselves aspire to become: a fatherland."

My young friend was, I felt, listening as earnestly as I was talking:

"What," she asked, "has Catholicism got to do with the historic evolution to which you refer?"

"This, it has made France what she is, it has retained the truly social instinct of primitive Christianity. It saw clearly enough that when individual rights triumph over the rights of the majority there is an end of society. Upon this sacrifice of the individual, first to the family interests and thereafter to the interests of humanity, Catholicism has laid the very foundations of the admirable example known in history as French society. To say that men have sometimes abused this training by attempting to dominate the French mind, and to govern France for their

own benefit, is to explain the anti-clerical movement which is now stirring up France and which should not be mistaken for an anti-religious movement. The very dreams of socialism whereby so many minds with us are haunted, as by a new religion, prove to you that we have remained the people, above all others, whose moral education has prepared them for the sacrifice of the individual to the general interests of society. The duties which society claims from the man we are familiar with. The duties which society exacts from the woman are summed up in a word. She shall bear children in order to fill up the gaps made by natural death, and by accidental death on the battle-field; she shall, by her fecundity, increase for the race its chances of supremacy and for the fatherland its long duration. A like prodigality of human life is considered by divine revelation as the surest of all the blessings of God. He does not say to his chosen people, 'The daughters of the nation shall be equal in intelligence and force to the sons whom thou shalt bear.' He promises them, 'Thy pos-

terity shall be like the stars, like the grains of sand. . . . Increase and multiply.' In other words, 'marry your daughters to your sons and let their descendants be numerous.'"

My courteous questioner pouted.

"Is this really," she said, "the order of things you follow in France? You think of nothing but to increase and multiply? I don't know much about statistics, but it seems to me that in Lausanne they told me the contrary was true. Your population is not increasing at a normal rate and your neighbours all outdo you on the subject of multiplication."

I was ready for this objection and it did not alarm me:

"I have already told you, Mademoiselle, that we have important lessons to learn from you in initiative, that our too close attachment to tradition has prevented us from making, rapidly enough, the necessary concessions to the progressive spirit, to the requirements of evolution. Hence the economic difficulties, evidently only fleeting,

which are a lesson to us. For example, our *bourgeoisie* should make up their minds to send their sons away from home, as the nobility did with their offspring. When they once do this, and they will do it soon, we shall breathe again in France. There will be room for countless cradles. We shall begin to increase and multiply like all the Catholic peoples in the world, the Canadians, the Irish, the Italians and the Spanish. And the best proof of the theory I advance is, that in spite of the temporary upheaval that accompanies any sudden evolution, we have changed nothing in our social standard, to-day as in days gone by, we recognise for woman only one vocation: marriage. We have not even found a word to designate a person of the feminine sex who is not married."

Miss R—— started.

"What do you mean?"

"This: we call a *jeune fille* a child that has not come of age, say, if you like, twenty or twenty-one years of age. We call a *vieille fille* a person who is over thirty-five. . . ."

"And between twenty-two and thirty-five, when one is no longer a *jeune fille* and not yet a *vieille fille*, what do you say? . . . *Une fille* and nothing more? . . ."

"We reserve that name to characterise the category of persons among whom Aspasia, the celebrated friend of Pericles, was a glorious example. But as all the Aspasias of our days have not the culture and the virtues of their ancestress, and as a very small number of the modern Aspasia's friends could be compared to Pericles for their nobility of soul and the services they render their country, the word *fille* has gradually taken a meaning so unfortunate it is the same as a mortal insult. A woman whom any one called *une fille* would have a right to ask that the outrage be wiped out with blood, if a gallant man could be found to defend the honour of one who in reality no longer has any honour."

Miss R—— contemplated fixedly the flowers in the rug pattern — without looking at me she said:

"And yet, at all times, in your country as

elsewhere, there have been women who did not marry. . . . What becomes of them?"

"The old custom was to shut them up, willing or not, in a convent, even when they did not wish to be old maids, and when they were sacrificed because money was lacking to marry them."

"But you have passed through the revolution and you no longer can shut up a girl in a convent against her will?"

"We have had several revolutions, and they have left the customs unchanged. In the France of the twentieth century as in the days of Abraham, as in India, as in Greece, as in Rome, as in the middle ages, as in Abyssinia, as in Mahometan Society, marriage is an obligation for woman. Is it not so in America as well?"

"At present," she said, "our ways of feeling are too foreign one to the other to permit of our talking to-day with profit on such a subject. You are going to travel through the United States, and I am sure you mean it when you say that you consider us with affection and friendship.

"Open your eyes and your ears; when you come back we can resume our conversation; but you must tell me your honest opinion, nothing for politeness' sake. We love sincerity in America, you know, you may have noticed that we carry our frankness even to *brusquerie* sometimes."

I promised my new friend that I would be as sincere with her as I am with myself when alone. And, doubtless, to seal the pact of our friendship she offered me a second cup of tea:

"With cream? . . . with milk? . . . with lemon? . . . with sugar? . . . no sugar? . . ."

Chapter V

MARRIAGE NOT AN OBLIGATION

I HAVE been travelling now several months across the U. S. A. — east and north, west and south, I have visited a great many towns and cities — observing, listening, questioning the unprejudiced and those whose remarks are valuable.

In even the smallest towns I have diligently read the newspapers and more particularly the paragraphs which we call *faits divers*, where the stories of every-day life, the history of a people, are recorded like examples in a grammar.

I have studied in their respective countries the diverse elements of population that America has melted together in her wonderful crucible to create a new metal, — I beg your pardon, — a new people. So far we have only an amalgam — but this combination already shows certain qualities altogether

new. It is no small thing to have visited on their native ground the Anglo-Saxon, the Celt, the German, the Russian, the Italian, the French, the Spaniard and the Jew (not to mention my friend the African), who all have a share in this unpremeditated combination.

I know what position the woman of each of these peoples holds in their families, in marriage, in society — but it would be a mistake to try and solve from this superficial knowledge, *à priori*, as one would solve a chemical experiment the problem of American psychology.

Three important factors are together responsible for the present form given to this new material so young, so fresh, so enduring, so rich in life-giving properties: the physical and climatic influences, the peculiar circumstances under which the virgin soil was appropriated, and the renunciation by the immigrants of their native tongue and traditions and adoption of the English language and Anglo-Saxon culture.

I know what pioneering in a new country

is — I once crossed the sea with my wife and children, and in a region of Algeria which strangely resembles some parts of Kansas where I have just been, I saw a planter build his home with stones from the untilled ground — and trees he had himself hewn down.

This primitive life most nearly approaches, I believe, the divine intent and the laws of nature. Man and woman cannot get along without each other. They each have a part to play which has been decided, not by law, but by the necessities of life.

A large family is considered a help, not a burden. The father hopes for strong sons who will later be able to relieve him. The mother desires daughters to aid her and take her place in the management of the household.

If these young girls are healthy and industrious they can easily find a husband. There are always some bachelors in the neighbourhood, — they have waited, before taking a wife, until there was a roof on the house and promise enough in their fields to bring up a family.

They have impatiently watched the development of a little neighbour on whom they have centred their hopes and their tenderness.

I know a society woman who once left Paris and took up this sort of life. Afterwards when she abandoned her farm and returned to civilisation and worldliness she always looked back with regret at that natural existence where man and woman are in such perfect harmony that one is not complete without the other.

This life I have just described whose ideal is, when the young woman enters the house of the young man, the foundation of a new family, could be the natural destiny of three quarters of the American girls.

I have had occasion to come very interestingly in contact with the girls of the U.S.A., having been invited to lecture in their principal colleges.

I did not merely address them from behind an unsympathetic desk. Every one of these lectures, in which I described the life of the young girls and women of my

country as represented in French literature — every one of these lectures, I say, were followed by receptions where I had the pleasure of talking freely with my young and charming listeners.

They knew that I considered them the hope of their country people — that I loved them as one loves the spring — that I had spoken to them of the girls and women of my country not as a lawyer who pleads his cause, but as a man who is truly devoted — and though our acquaintance was of such short duration — I seemed to win their confidence. I have moreover kept up a correspondence with many of these young ladies.

Here is an answer from one of them to a question which I put concerning the subject we are treating:

"You ask me if my friends and I think a great deal about marriage, and if we are waiting impatiently for the end of our college days so as to become a Mrs. So and So?

"I believe we are above all absorbed in

the pleasure of learning and of living so independently together and among such beautiful surroundings.

"A great many of us are preparing to become teachers, a course which not only ensures an honourable income to those who follow it, but also allows them to have some influence on the coming generation and to give full vent to any ideas they may have.

"Others study as I do, for the mere pleasure of studying and of feeling that every day we become superior to what we were the day before; we are grieved at the thought that these college days must end.

"We would like to lengthen the days and add years upon years.

"It is not only the study that we love, but it's the discussion, the passionate discussions and defence of our own ideas, our own enthusiasms.

"Where will we find as interesting and as cultured a surrounding again?

"We do not converse or discuss much in the world; our fathers, brothers, husbands, are absorbed in business.

"We are obliged to satisfy ourselves with books and club meetings. College is the best club in the world. There we are all equal, none of us are hampered by the cares of house-keeping or of sick children, we live for nothing else but our intellectual culture.

"Is not that an ideal life? If you could understand its charm as we American girls do, you would realise why almost none of us are impatient to marry, and why a great many of the more serious of us have decided not to marry at all."

There is still another type of the very worldly girl, who resembles our own girls on the continent.

She has not been to college, but has been educated at home. She is a cosmopolitan, for she has travelled a great deal.

She thinks more about sports, travels, worldly pleasures, "seasons" at fashionable resorts, than of books and intellectual culture, but she is no less absorbed by her own interests.

Alfred de Musset has written a comedy

in which our young girls see themselves portrayed: "*À quoi rêvent les jeunes filles?*"

The young ladies whom I am speaking about do not dream, — they act, they live, they dance, they swim, they play tennis or golf, they ride horseback, go to dressmakers, theatres, and casinos. They have breakfast, dinner, supper. They fill the young men of the old continent with unlimited admiration, our mothers with a good deal of uneasiness, and our young girls are very needlessly jealous of them: in reality they love attention, but have no idea of charming away from their less brilliant rivals, *fiancés*, which would not suit them, first of all, because the most generous and lenient of husbands could not be more generous or more lenient than the American father; secondly, because that father who lavishes generosity on his daughter as long as she lives with him, has not yet adopted the custom of giving her a dowry, which would allow her to keep up after marriage as luxurious a household as when she was unmarried; and lastly, because, though the young American men are the most capa-

ble business men in the world, they can hardly be expected to have a fortune after a few years' work.

The state of mind, presented so frankly by the college girl whose letter I have quoted above, answers for her companions, for all the girls of her generation, no matter what class of society they belong to. The American girl, face to face with her conscience, does not recognise any very pressing duty except toward herself. Her mother and father do not urge her, for the sake of having a family, to hurry into marriage as the unique solution which can ensure them happiness for their old age. As she is not under the control of any one older or more experienced than she, she forgets that there are other reasons beside love for marrying. On Sunday when she goes to church, the minister in his sermon does not say that the duty of a truly Christian girl is to give up celibacy, and to find her salvation according to the divine plan, in the responsibilities of a wife and a mother. The economists who talk in meetings, who write in the news-

papers, or the magazines, never give this cry of warning:

"Beware of celibacy! It is devouring us; our population is increasing only because of immigration. Our marriages are sterile. The Yankee type is disappearing. Soon Americans will be the minority in America."

Optimism is the rule, success sanctifies it; every one lives from day to day, and it seems to work well. The American girl is like the rest; marriage is not presented to her from an individual, a religious, a social or a home point of view, as being an obligation.

Chapter VI

THE MAN IS EDUCATED BY THE WOMAN

IT is not the lawgivers who proclaim in their codes that: "Marriage shall be an obligation for woman," or that: "Marriage shall not be an obligation for woman." In the case of which we are speaking, it is custom that decides everything. Among the various nations that have existed up to the present time there has been a common consent, based on the very foundations of civilisation itself, that "Woman shall not do without man." American society is of the contrary opinion. Quite avowedly, with pride even, it is making the experiment of the "woman without the man." The conclusion we draw is that men and women in the United States are in an altogether new position economically and

sentimentally. There is a French proverb not devoid of sense which says, "Don't growl at your own hunger." If the American woman were growling at her heart or her genuine feelings, she would not get very far in the direction she is now following and seems determined to follow.

Our object is to try and outline, with all that is striking and exceptional in them, the portraits of these two creatures, new upon the surface of the earth: the American man and the American woman who have no imperative need the one of the other.

Leibnitz said:

"He who is school-master is master of the world." All the civilisations we know anything about have held this opinion. They have decreed that the world should be governed by men. They have not permitted that the right to instruct and train the intellect of the world's future ruler should be granted to those who were to become his servitors.

Every one knows some Greek and Roman history. We all remember that the Greeks,

when they wished to form an ideal man whom they called a "hero," a man whose physical development was in perfect harmony with his intellectual culture, took him as a young boy from the gynæceum, took him from the society and influence of women as soon as he had cut his second teeth.

In Rome this emancipation from the guardianship of woman is the earliest recollection of which the youth is proud. His life begins from the moment when he presents himself at the Forum in his *pretexte* robes. The ceremony accompanying corresponds to our confirmation.

Christianity, when at its dawn and about to uplift woman, who had been too long sacrificed to pagan violence and sensuality, was yet fearful lest she abuse the rights accorded to her: "But I suffer not a woman to teach," writes the Apostle Paul to Timothy, "nor to usurp authority over man, but to be in silence."[1]

Here we have the essence of the Christian teaching, and there is no word that can hold

[1] 1 Timothy, ii. 12.

good against it. Let me remark, in passing, that this method of educating man by men, employed by our Mediterranean races, was not so unfortunate for the women, as it resulted in chivalry and the manifestations of courtesy carried throughout the world.

This axiom, "I suffer not a woman to teach," being once for all established as the result of universal experience, let us proceed to examine how things are done in the United States.

I have the pleasantest memory of the first primary school I visited. It was like a large cage, light and sunny, full of tame birds. Little girls and little boys were seated behind the desks side by side. They came evidently from very different social ranks — we were not in New York, nor in the West, but in one of the middle states typically American. The social classes were as well mingled as the sexes, and the experiment, still somewhat vague, was not devoid of charm. They were shining with cleanliness; their hair was brushed as never was; their shoes glistened. Truth obliges me to

admit that if I had had to give a prize to one of the two categories present for the straightest part and the best-polished shoes, it would certainly have been the girls who would have carried off the prize.

Of the amiable friends who were with me I asked:

"Is there no obstacle to good manners in bringing together children of such different breeding and position? I am anything but a snob, and I have often invited the small daughters of workingmen to play with my little girl. I have been obliged to do it less and less, as I noticed that after each meeting, my child had caught certain expressions and manners, a way of speaking altogether impossible. Friends of mine who have tried the same experiment tell me they have met with the same drawbacks."

They answered me simply:

"You would not see this mixture of classes in an Eastern school."

So I concluded that here, as elsewhere, people have found out that certain radical social differences make public school imprac-

ticable, and that this just discovery goes hand in hand, in a society, with culture. It was on my tongue's end to say that the boys are a class, not a social but a human class, very different from girls, and that still greater culture in America, as in other countries, would lead to the separation of the boys from the girls. But I had not come to expound my ideas; I had come with the earnest desire of absorbing myself in the ideas presented me for observation, and I begged that they would go on with the lesson which our arrival had interrupted.

It was a reading lesson. It seemed to me the method used — I don't know whether we have the same — was very ingenious.

The children had before them a page of very short sentences. They spelt them out to themselves. When they thought they understood them, they lifted their hands, and the one who first announced his or her success was asked to read the sentence aloud. This system had the advantage not only of keeping the scholars breathlessly attentive, but it developed among them a spirit of

competition and a desire to be quick which in America, more than in any country of the world, is the first essential to success.

The idea occurred to me very naturally to count and see whether the number of victors were equally divided; whether one sex had a marked advantage over the other. There was no illusion possible: the little girls without any effort outdid the little boys. And good conduct was not the only heading under which they appeared as an example to the boys; they were first in wide-awake, lively intelligence and quick-wittedness. Let me hasten to add that I renewed my test in a number of schools, and that the result was everywhere the same.

It was not only on the school benches and under the spur of competition that the American boys learned the melancholy lesson of the inferiority of their sex, the superiority of the other. Knowledge was imparted to them, not by a man, but by a woman, a young girl. They looked at her with an almost devout respect, this young, golden-haired person who was dragging them up

out of the gutter to make free citizens of them in a great republic. With us, as elsewhere, they have tried having the elementary classes entirely taught by women; these classes we call "maternal classes," which name alone indicates how fleeting must be the boy's contact with any women teachers. As soon as he has reached what we call the age of reason (that is, seven or eight years) he is taken from feminine guidance and placed in the hands of men. I was curious to know if this were the case in the United States. I had as companion on my visit to the primary school a very well-known professor from a neighbouring university. When we had returned to his house, where no indiscreet ears could overhear us, I begged him to answer my numerous questions. Professor T—— declared:

"We don't share the same prejudice you seem to feel regarding the education of the boy by women. We pay no attention as to whether the professors who teach boys and girls in the same infant classes be men or women. The only requirement we make is

that, male or female, they shall have passed the necessary examinations and have some aptitude for teaching. It's a mere matter of chance whether a boy be instructed during the primary and secondary grades, by men or by women."

"And this chance, is it about equal one way or the other, like *rouge et noir* on the roulette table?"

"Well, no, to tell you the truth. The statistics published in 1870 showed that 59 per cent of the teachers in the United States were women."

"Have you no more recent figures?"

"Yes, I have. A bulletin published in 1898 shows that the per cent of women teachers has gone up from 59 to 70."

"And have you reason to believe that this influx of women teachers among the American schools is going to decrease?"

"On the contrary, it's more likely to increase. Let statistics speak for themselves. They show that in three quarters of the American schools instruction is given by women."

"You must leave out of the count those whom I teach, those who follow the University courses."

"Certainly, but are there a great number of them?"

"The number is increasing every year, but it is, no doubt, insignificant compared to the masses who set out to earn a living as soon as they leave primary school, and to all those who never get any farther than the grammar school."

"You are speaking of boys of what age?"

"Fourteen or fifteen years old."

"And once they have left school, study for study's sake is ended for them?"

"They don't simply *go*, they *rush* into business! Like so many colts, bred and trained for racing, who at last feel themselves on the turf!"

"This haste is very unselfish, but it should not blind us to the fact that the young American boy, by not going to college, loses the only chance he will ever know to have his mind moulded by masculine instructors. Son of woman by the flesh,

he becomes doubly so by the spirit. And this, you have just told me, is the destiny of three quarters of the men in your country."

Professor T—— reflected and then said:

"Do you feel that it is a misfortune?"

"From an intellectual point of view I think nobody could doubt it.—If you divide all the ideas acquired by humanity, since humanity has existed upon earth, into two piles, if you put all the ideas, the scientific discoveries, the contributions to philosophy and the rest due to man in one pile, and in the other pile all the ideas for which we have woman to thank, you will have a mountain on one side and a mole-hill on the other. It is better that the ideas originated by men should be administered by men."

"Yet you have just remarked yourself that, in the United States at least, the little school-girl outdoes the little school-boy in her eagerness to learn and her innate capacity for study."

"It is not the little American girl out-

doing the little American boy, it is the girl of all countries up to the age of about fifteen, who outdoes the boy of all countries in the precociousness of her mind and sentiments. It is the same in France as elsewhere. When a composition requiring cultivated taste and personal judgment is given out by the French professors to girls of fifteen and boys of the same age, it is always the girls who get the best marks. But wait a few years! five or six years later the tables are turned; the young girls who follow our university courses are completely outdistanced by the men students in every subject they take up together. I am not speaking of French girls only, but of girls of every nationality who come to attend the classes at the Sorbonne and the Collège de France. And if, by the rarest exception, a woman does reach the highest ranks, she pays for it miserably with her health, often even with the loss of her reason, this effort she has demanded of her brain, and which is out of all proportion with her strength as a woman."

"That is not the case with us, although

certain doctors have already taken a stand against overstudy among young girls."

"The results I mention are facts established by the medical investigation carried on in all the European centres where higher education is practised. With you, almost all the boys of the middle class stop their studies at fifteen, that is to say, just at the moment when their brain, slower to develop than the female brain, would begin to recognise its force and assert its superiority. The young girls, on the contrary, go on with their lessons. If you compare the sum total of effort and perseverance put forth relatively by the girls who are preparing for college and the boys who are going to the universities, you will see that the girls apply themselves with unfailing ardour, while three-fourths of the college students place sport before study. You know better than I that they enter the universities to get a reputation for something beside learning. The result of this anomaly is a spectacle which the United States is first to offer the world: a nation where the women taken as a whole

are more learned than the men. They very naturally feel inclined to participate in that training of the young mind known as public-school teaching. I am not the only one to perceive their powerful influence in forming the standard whereby your people live and will continue to live. One of your most brilliant and wittiest statesmen said the other day at a banquet: 'In the United States we men are governed by our wives, and our wives are governed by our daughters. So the country is run by the young girls!'[1] This expressed very cleverly a truth which every one admits to be true under his own roof. The laugh was general, there was no *arrière pensée*. Every one applauded."

Professor T—— laughed himself. "I have a daughter," he said, "who went to college. I understand what you mean, . . . and yet . . ." My companion stopped a moment before formulating his thought. He was seeking the truth with an honest seriousness which inspired respect, and one felt that this deliberate meditation was a habit

[1] Gen. Horace Parker.

with him. ". . . Yet, supposing that the invasion of the masculine domain of learning by women has certain drawbacks from an intellectual point of view, there are great advantages in having the man's nature developed by woman. She conveys to him something of her delicacy, her reserve, her natural refinement. I am convinced that this feminine training given by women teachers to the young American boys is one of the reasons for the extreme respect in which the American man holds woman. This is a conclusion to our discussion which I in turn offer you for consideration."

Chapter VII

SENTIMENTAL EDUCATION

I WOULD like just here to outline the portraits of two young friends of mine who stand out from the throng of my American acquaintances as two types truly characteristic of American youth.

John, I knew at New York in the office of an important business man who lent him to me temporarily as secretary. At once there sprang up between us a bond of affection and trust. We soon became and we shall remain friends.

John has, I think, a few drops of Irish blood in his veins. I attribute to this Celtic origin his somewhat unusual ease in expressing himself. Beside this gift he is from top to toe a young American of the breed who seize an opportunity as it passes, at full gallop, and who spring astride of it without saddle or bridle.

He was educated and brought up like all the boys in his country who have a good many sisters and brothers and a father very much inclined to approve when they announce, on leaving the primary school, that their intention is to quit their studying, to plunge into the battle of business, and to become self-supporting at once.

I asked John if he had had many women teachers at school. He answered me:

"All I know was taught me by women."

"And the young girls, your comrades, did they get ahead of you in the class exercises?"

"Always! girls are so much more clever than boys!"

John pronounces this word "clever" without the slightest idea of reproach, but with a touch of respectful admiration.

John just manages to make a living. He does not spend much time at meals, for he has little time to spare and little money too, and this he prefers spending on his clothes. If I should compare these clothes to those of a French student who is well provided for

by his parents, I would give the advantage every time to John for taste, and niceness. His boots shine like those of a millionaire. I suspect him of polishing them himself with Boston shoe polish, which he keeps hidden in a small cupboard I have seen in his room. At least I know what an ingenious trick he has for preserving the crease from waist to foot in his trousers. They look like new until the very last day he wears them. At night, before going into bed, John carefully folds them, stretches them out flat between the mattress and the springs, and then he sleeps on them.

John is uncompromising on the subject of his shirt-fronts, his collars and his cuffs. He does not admit for a moment that a young man who wishes to succeed should economise on his wash-bill. In this respect he has the coquetry of a young second lieutenant on the day of inspection. The comparison is apt. I once asked John this:

"Is it to please the girls that you part your hair so beautifully, that you shave so carefully before your beard has begun to

grow?" He answered me seriously. (John is almost always serious, although he is naturally of a cheerful disposition.)

"The girls like a man that's careful about his clothes. But the very moment when I expect it least my boss might send for me to ask me something I ought to know. When this chance comes I want the boss to see me fixed up all right, so he'll remember me favourably."

The hope of this moment when his employer sends for him and gives him a chance to show the stuff he is made of is the unique preoccupation of John. He is always preparing for it, sleeping or waking. He is aware that what he learned at the primary school is quite insufficient. He would like to perfect himself in a multitude of subjects and to speak at least one foreign language. So he goes to night school. He is posted as to every free course a person can take in a big city like New York, and this is another "opportunity" which he does not let escape him.

One evening I took John with me to

Brooklyn; I was giving a lecture before a young ladies' school. There was a cluster of girls before us, fresh, pretty, smiling. On the way home in the elevated road John and I had a sentimental chat together about the impression this charming vision had made upon us.

"I don't believe," John said to me, "that there is any country in the world where the girls are as pretty as they are in America."

He was beaming with pride and overflowing with pure happiness.

"What an encouragement for a fellow," he exclaimed poetically, "to say to himself: 'If you work and stick at it, if you dream at night of what you have to do the next day, the time will come when you can go to a girl, like one of those we saw this evening, and say to her: "I have made a home for you. Will you come to it?"'"

No matter how carried away he may be with the idea of having a wife, the first duty of a young John is to keep himself informed as to what is going on in the world. My

comrade had bought a newspaper before boarding the elevated train. He opened it and glanced through it, his eyes always shining brightly, a smile on his face. Suddenly he frowned:

"What is it, John?"

"Read that."

He handed me the paper. It had an account of the melancholy suicide of some young John, whose last letter, found under his pillow with a revolver, was published in full:

"I am twenty-six years old. Four years ago I married Miss Ellen D——. We only lived together three months. I could n't manage to earn enough money to give her the things a husband should give his wife. Despair got hold of me. I want Ellen to be free, so I am going to take my life. She can marry a more successful man. I want her to be happy with him. This is the last wish of the one who loved her."

I gave the paper back to my young friend. He did not say, as I thought he would: "Poor fellow!" He, too, was thinking

of Ellen D——, and he declared: "I can perfectly understand his despair. You have no right to make the woman you love suffer."

"What do you mean by suffer?"

He seemed surprised at the question:

"I mean," said he, "that the young girl who consents to marry me has a right to demand that I supply all her needs and all her whims. You must spoil the one you love! When a girl marries, you can be sure it is not with the idea of ever having to work again."

This axiom which John was letting forth was not one of his own invention; it was taught to him when he was little, he has heard it reiterated by all the young Johns of his acquaintance, including the poor creature who had died with it on his lips.

I said solemnly:

"Then the young American men have to wait a great while before they can marry. And during that interval, John, how do they pass their time?"

He answered slyly:

"Why, they work."

"But Saturday night, Sunday, what do they do?"

"Saturday night they go to gymnasium or they play games at some club or other."

"And that suffices, they need nothing more to let out the animal spirits, the enthusiasm that exists in the youth of all countries even when they're exhausted by work?"

John hesitated a second, then, as he was the essence of frankness, and as he knew I was well enough informed, so that his confidences would not betray the freemasonry of young men, he added:

"The day he is roused in the way you mean, he drinks, first he drinks a little, then he drinks too much. The next day he does n't remember what has happened; he does n't want to remember. But I have lots of friends who do just as I do, they don't drink, they have a girl friend, and they write to her when she is away."

"Have you a friend of this kind, John?" John becomes confidential. There is, it ap-

pears, a young woman, whom he will probably never marry, as she is older than he and will be married before he can say to her: "I have made a home for you, will you come to it?" He does not think, either, that he is in love with her. He did n't say to me, "I love her"; he said, "I admire her tremendously."

"And why do you admire her, John?"

"She knows so much more than I do. . . . She went to the normal school. And then girls are so much cleverer than boys. Sometimes of a Saturday night I take her to the theatre with one or two of her girl friends. Sunday I go to the same church she does, and then I walk home with her afterwards. Whether she talks about the sermon or the theatre she always has something to say. She has ideas about everything . . . about things I have never even thought of. I learn a lot when I am with her. You could n't help admiring her if you knew her."

I assured John that if I happened to meet the young person he waits for every Sunday at the church door, I was certain I would

admire her as much as he did. What I did n't tell him often enough, though, and what he will learn if he reads these pages, is, how fond I am of him, himself.

I did not come to this great and in countless ways admirable country, the United States, as a flatterer who seeks applause in exchange for smiles, but as an observer who wishes with all his critical faculties to study one of the most amazing manifestations humanity has attempted on earth since history has kept a record of evolution. From the first I have noticed all sorts of efforts that I would like to see imitated by my country people. I have also noticed many standpoints which world-wide experience has condemned and which contemporary history will before long condemn anew. What I admire boundlessly is the young American boy, so serious, so ardent in the battle for work, so upright in his sentiments, so creditably ambitious. It is through him that the United States will win the great victories, moral and economical.

His heart swells as he reads the books of

Mr. Carnegie, who tells how carefully he and his comrades, the millionaires of to-day, covered up their shirt-fronts when they were boys, to keep them clean while they swept the office floor. It is then he impresses me as a little soldier of the *Grande Armée*, listening, at night, in the light of the camp-fire, to the story of how the Marshals of the Empire fought when they were nothing but privates. When the story is told, the private soldier of Austerlitz falls asleep, his head on his knapsack, and dreams that in that knapsack he carries the baton of a marshal of France.

Thus it is John dreams on his trousers, carefully folded under the mattress. Modern warfare is no longer practised on the field of honour, but on the ground of economies. Yet the same qualities of self-confidence, a high ideal, noble sentiments, valour, for ever win the victory. I can give John no more sincere proof of my affection and my faith in him than this. I want my oldest son, whom I have brought up as the apple of my eye, to cross the seas, to fight the

good fight side by side with this young American boy. I want him to learn through John's example how one should spend one's youth. I want him to become the friend of John.

Chapter VIII

UNIVERSITY EDUCATION

MY friend Harry is somewhat younger than my friend John. He belongs to the happy category of youths who are not hampered by the necessity of making a living. His ambition was to enter college and pass several years at study before starting out, like John, in the world of business.

I had tea with my friend Harry at his rooms, the students' lodgings which he occupies with one of his friends. Very discreetly his friend had absented himself, and left us free to talk, as we had the place to ourselves.

"Is it really," I asked, "to become a Greek and Latin scholar that you are at this university, Harry?"

"I 'm very good about following lectures . . . " he protested.

"I have read the 'Harvard Episodes,'" I answered, "and 'The Diary of a Freshman,' beside a quantity of magazines and papers published by the students who are following the university courses in America. I have smoked and chatted in the fellows' rooms; I have been the recipient of confidences from the professors, the tutors and the lodging-house keepers. I have heard university life discussed 'from an undergraduate standpoint' and from the other point of view. They initiated me into one of your secret societies, so you need not be formal with me. We are freemasons of the same lodge."

Harry laughed and said:

"Well, then, I 'll confess to you it was not the love of Plato and Virgil that induced me to leave my native town and hang my pipe-rack on the walls of this study. My father never expected me to feign a taste that was not sincere. He had another object in mind when he consented to send me here."

"What was it?"

"My mother was worried to death. She thought I would get killed or lamed for life

playing foot-ball. Father said to her, 'Boys can't go on living as they did when I was young, — they've simply got to become *more sociable*.'"

"More sociable? In what way did your father mean it?"

"Just the way he said it. It's clear enough. My father is a merchant. He's made a brilliant success in his business, and it's all owing to his own merit too. He's a self-made man. He never went to anything but primary school in the little Western town where he was born. To-day he is President of the —— Club, and I can tell you they listen to him pretty sharply when he speaks there. They go to him for advice. They applaud him like anything when he makes a speech. But the minute he leaves his office or the club, he becomes absolutely silent. At meals he carves for us without saying a word. It's my sisters and my mother who do the talking. After dinner, if he does n't go back to the club, he settles down with a cigar, a newspaper, a whiskey and soda. He reads and smokes and dozes. He does n't

talk. And it 's not because he is n't thinking. You can see by his expression that he is preoccupied, but he has n't ever acquired the habit of putting into words any ideas except those that have to do with business and the fluctuations of the market. He 's especially quiet before women. In business he has the reputation of being awfully bold; often in a discussion with a board of managers he has fought for his own way and come out triumphant against them all. As soon as a woman, even one of the family, appears on the threshold of the room where he is, he gets timid. I don't know whether he has suffered inwardly from this timidity, but I know that he did n't want me to get the same way for the same reasons. For once he had his wish against my mother's . . . and here I am, learning to be 'more sociable.' "

"Do you suppose your father wanted you to be more a man of the world than he is; don't you think that the word 'sociable' as he used it meant something deeper and more serious?"

"What do you mean?"

" I have been in other countries where the development of the individual was as much considered as in the United States ; Norway, for example. If you look into the novels which depict Norwegian psychology you will see that every one, but the women more especially than the men, is suffering from a vague, ill-defined restlessness. It is moral to begin with ; it ends by becoming physical. It is the weariness of the soul that turns for ever upon self; the will that ends in revulsion or over-enthusiasm ; the heart that sickens. This restlessness has a very simple explanation: the Northern peoples have carried the individual development so far that they have ended by losing sight of others, of the ' neighbour,' to use the gospel word. First, it is a relief to them, an intense joy ; they are proud and happy to be so free, so emancipated, so self-sufficient. This joy gradually becomes an agony of loneliness, of impotence, of exasperation. Thus in the Northern training, where the egoism of the individual triumphs, the social instinct, too long sacrificed, ends by avenging itself. A

university like this, my dear Harry, is a miniature society, a republic of antiquity. I mean by that an assembly of men, devoid of women or the influence of women. . . . Unless I am very much mistaken in my observations of what goes on around me, I gather, from the students I know and have talked with, that they care infinitely less about the approbation of their professors than for the esteem and friendship of their fellow-students. What your father wanted to see brought out in you was exactly the very qualities, the development of character, the exercise of self-control, which call forth the esteem of others."

Harry had listened seriously to this long discourse. It seemed as though I had put clearly into words certain ideas which had been more or less haunting him, for he exclaimed with an outburst of joy :

"You have hit the nail on the head! When I came here I felt exactly the kind of loneliness and sadness you speak of. I used to take long walks all by myself, to get rid of it. I used to fairly curse those long

evenings in my room, with a book I made a pretence of reading, a bottle of beer that had no taste. I bored myself sick at dreary plays, at second-class athletic games that could n't rouse any one's enthusiasm. It seemed as though I was on the ragged edge of university life without being able to get into it. I felt I was losing my time. I wondered why it was I could n't make friends. I did n't dare tell any one how miserable I was. I was ashamed of myself. And I would still be if by the merest chance I had n't happened to bring home with me one night a very popular fellow who had taken a drop too much. He gave me the clue for entering a certain group I never would have dared approach. I believe it 's the women and the girls we go with at school that make a man so awkward later! You end, after contemplating long enough their superiority, by believing that they are another race of human beings on earth and that you have no right to associate with them."

"And now have you gotten entirely over your first timidity and awkwardness?"

"Oh, yes, — when you live among men you always know where you stand. I could tell you in a word exactly the qualities that make a man popular. No one cares whether he is rich, whether the professors like him, whether he is good at Greek and Mathematics. He 's surrounded and made a fuss over because he 's 'sociable,' because he 's straightforward and amiable, because he knows how to win respect without bothering any one. Such men are almost always gifted and brilliant, and they 're sure to distinguish themselves in some way, at athletics or something else."

"It would seem as though you bore a grudge against the women and girls, my dear Harry. Is this feeling peculiar to yourself, or do your class-mates share in it?"

Harry responded promptly:

"How do you explain this paradox: If you question the fellows here, I think almost all of them would answer you, 'We are delighted to live here just among men, with men's ideas and men's tastes, without any female professors or companions. . . . And

yet . . . and yet there's hardly a man, except the farmers' sons who are exhausted working their way through college, who does not put on his dinner coat several evenings a week, to go and see his "best girl" either at a dinner or to make a call upon her. The girls torment us, they make fun of us, we have to obey their whims, they scorn us if we are attentive to them, they only smile upon those who have nothing to do with them, and yet we can't get along without them. A man who has no invitations in town, no chance to meet his "best girl" now and then at a party, no reason to reserve chairs on gala days, would feel that he has come in vain to spend his four years at college, that he has made a failure of growing "more sociable."'"

"You just said that the 'best girls' were especially attracted to the men who are the least attentive to them. . . . Which are these Hippolytes?"

Harry got up from the little divan where we were sitting.

"Would you like to go down on the

Campus with me? I'll take you around and show you the buildings where my friends live. You can pick out for yourself the favourites I mean."

I did as he proposed. It was the dreary season when the grass lies buried under the snow, and the Campus walks are covered with plank boards. Needless to say, there was not a flower visible in the flower beds. But the windows and the bay windows were decorated with bright-coloured silks, plastered well in sight against the window-panes, so that every one who passed could see them. They were not put there for ornament, but for show.

"Those silks and embroidered things, you see," said Harry, "are cushions."

"Where can they be bought — I didn't see any for sale in town?"

"You can't buy them. That would be cheating. They are presents. . . . They are made by the best girls, who give them to their friends. They stick them up in the windows with pride; they want people to see them from outside, and to know that they are 'sociable' young men."

I could not help smiling as I cast a pitying glance toward the windows of the poor freshman, where there was not a single little stray cushion in sight. Whereas certain Don Juans thrice blessed had heaped up regular mountains of silk and ribbon in their bay windows.

"Look at that window," Harry said to me with a touch of jealousy, "and that one . . . and that one! Is n't it positively indecent?"

It could not be denied that the owners of these rooms had no shame in vaunting the esteem wherein the lovely half of humanity held them.

"These fellows," said Harry, "are all athletes. I don't need to add that when they go out they are the most indifferent to the women. The girls are ready to applaud them when they have accomplished some grand feat; they don't object to this; but they care much less about the moods of a best girl than about the condition and training of a rival. They prefer the simple approbation of the umpire of a match to

a pile of cushions in the college colours, embroidered by their best girls and by the other men's best girls. How does it happen, do you suppose, that the girls go mad about the very fellows who make the least fuss over them?"

It was on my tongue to say: "But it is precisely because the athletes pay no attention to the best girls, that the best girls prefer them!"

But I reflected that my young friend Harry was not yet ready to comprehend a truth so absolute in spite of its contradictory appearances. Before he can grasp it he must become "more sociable" — as his father desired.

Chapter IX

THE YOUNG GIRL

I HAVE already spoken of an experiment in pioneering which I once made with my wife and children to the colonies in a new unsettled country. A word tells the story; the whole refinement, the entire hope of man, is brought to him by the woman in the very folds of her gown. The gratitude man feels toward her becomes a veritable worship. His life before her arrival is that of an Adam, alone in the world; he is weary, the spectacle of an earthly paradise unfolds itself in vain before his eyes, for there is no truth more precious in human nature than this: happiness partaken of in solitude is not so good as sorrow shared with one we love.

The woman makes her appearance and everything changes. The man, returning from work, exhausted with the day's effort, is already cheered, as, from a bend in the

road, he perceives the smoke curling upward above his home. It is then he feels keenly that the struggle he is making is not lost in a heedless world. There is a place in the world, a tiny spot, where somebody, and that somebody the object of all his endeavour, waits and watches for him. When I myself at nightfall, in the lonely way and sometimes in the winter mists, used to hunt out the faint path that led toward home, many is the time I have felt my heart leap as I caught sight of the fire they were lighting on the terrace of our farm to guide me in the darkness. Through the wide stretch of shadows I could see the kindly light, kindled far off in the night. I recalled the ancient worship of the fire in the temples that was for ever kept burning by the hands of the women, such the symbol of life and hope, the very heart of civilisation.

The miracle of hope, I thought, will last for the whole race of man, so long as the smoke of the evening fire rises above the roof, kept alive by the tenderness of a wife and of a mother.

I need only glance back upon these memories to understand the outburst of love and gratitude with which the pioneers of young America greeted the first women who came to share their life of struggle and hardship. They brought with them all the traditions of the abandoned fatherland, all the hopes of the new country. Being so much in the minority, they could make a choice, as queens do, with a liberty unknown to the women of to-day. And this choice was guided inevitably according to the inclination of the feminine nature, toward physical force. When one tries to account for the truly aristocratic privileges which the woman continues to exercise in American society, one must go back to the love and gratitude of the first settlers.

And these privileges exist! To be sure, the family is proud of its sons who will perpetuate the name, and who can take upon their shoulders the overwhelming burden of business the day the father, killed by overwork, shall fail his family. The son appears early in the aspect of an heir. He is shown

the consideration of a future king. He is born a Prince of Wales. The daughter does not have to wait for marriage to lift her upon the throne and place her where she belongs: she is born a queen. A queen at once, a queen without prime ministers, without a Parliament to thwart her caprices, a queen with a crown on her head and a sceptre in her hand.

The absolute joy she brings into the family simply because she has taken the trouble to be born is keener in America than anywhere else in the world. This is not a place to describe the bond of tenderness that exists between the little French girl and her father. It partakes of a joy and a delicacy that love knows nothing of. The day of her birth the man's heart unfolds to let in sweetness and, above all, a solicitude which have something of motherly grace in them. The father knows that his beloved daughter begins life in a world where marriage is an obligation. And this future marriage troubles him from the hour the child begins to talk. At the moment when this union should be

consummated, will he, the father, be sufficiently prosperous financially to establish his daughter with a *dot* large enough, so that this child need be deprived in her new life of none of the refinements with which she was surrounded under the paternal roof. And even supposing that the question of money does not haunt the father's dreams, the question of sentiment troubles him. He knows, by experience, that in this obligatory marriage, his daughter will be the ward of the man whom she marries. Her happiness, one might almost say her salvation, depends upon the master, affectionate or domineering, whom fate allots her. An immense heartfelt pity is mingled with the joy the father feels. He knows the nature of womankind through and through; he realises how rare it is to find a man equal to a woman's ideal; a man who can bring her from the skies to the earth without offending. The American father does not recognise these anxieties. He thinks no more of giving a *dot* to his daughter than he did of receiving a sum of money from his father-

in-law when he married a wife himself. In the same way he does not undertake later to find a husband for his daughter who will "understand her and make her happy." In America every one for himself. It is his daughter's business to find a husband after her own heart and to present him to her father when her mind is made up. If she does n't marry — marriage in the United States is not an obligation for the woman — either because she has not met the right man or because she wished to keep her entire independence, the paternal home, the paternal pocket-book, are open to her as long as her father lives, and it is customary for the daughter to make liberal use of both home and money. A young woman typically American said to me:

"You ask what my feelings were for my father, my intercourse with him when I was a child? His very first thought always was that I should lack for nothing; when I came to say good-morning he examined me like a general who takes in at a glance the way his orderly is turned out. His

inspection went from the tips of my boots to the crown of my head, taking in my gloves on the way. I saw no more of him for the rest of the day. Our fathers are never at home. I had no idea that he loved me, but I loved him; I felt that he was proud of me, because whenever he had a friend with him, he always sent for me, and as he presented me, there was something radiant in his expression. But between us there was not the slightest demonstration. He did not enter into my life except to give me presents on Christmas or other anniversaries, or when I had done well in my studies. My true sentiment toward him has always been tinged with the fear I used to feel as a little girl when he came home in the evening. I used to say to myself: 'Good-bye romping. You must keep quiet now — papa is at home.' I have questioned lots of my friends on this subject, girls who were brought up among the same people and in the same way as I. They have all told me they had the same feeling of respect, mingled with fear, on the one hand, the lack

of demonstration on the other, which remains inevitably connected in my recollection of my father."

No matter which way I turn I hear the same opinion echoed. The feeling of fear is more or less pronounced, the lack of expansion is more or less decided; what never varies is the unending generosity of the father toward his daughter. She has scarcely time to formulate a wish — nothing is fine enough nor perfect enough where she is concerned. I have visited more than one royal interior; I have never seen anything to compare with the luxury which the American father lavishes upon his daughter, if he is at all successful in his business. What would the spoiled children whose homes I have seen think of the little room with its wash-stand and dressing-table hidden behind two screens in the manor at Bernstoff, where King Christian of Denmark brought up the dowager Empress of Russia and the present Queen of England?

In order to explain such prodigality — which from the top to the bottom of the

social ladder is the rule for each according to his means — we must have recourse to the twofold principle diametrically opposed to our own; in the United States the individual is everything, and the present moment is the only one that counts. To each individual should be given every opportunity for health and happiness. If he is a child he should be spared all knowledge of the worries life entails, worries he is sure to meet with later on, on his way. "I do not wish," said Madame de Maintenon, when she founded St. Cyr for the young girls of the French nobility, "I do not wish our girls to think that, when they want a new coat, it suffices simply to be measured for it." It is exactly what the American father does want his girls to think. I have published a small book,[1] which is in reality an autobiography, to show how the children in a French family are kept, so to speak, daily informed of their father's business anxieties; how they modify their needs according to the prosperity of the moment. In the United

[1] O mon Passé. . . .

States, up to the very hour of financial ruin, the children, and more especially the young girls, know nothing of the father's troubles. It is a sort of professional honour among business men to keep for themselves all their worries. They would consider it a weakness to make serious before their day the young daughters who have a right to riches and pleasure.

The relation between the American girl and her mother is naturally more intimate, and of a more expansive nature. I asked one of my new friends if she would tell me what her experience had been. She wrote in answer the following letter:

"What strikes me most of all when I consider the origin of most of the families with whom I associate in New York, where I live, is how short a time any of them have been, not so much in this country, but in this city, where they are at present fixed. Take, for example, my grandparents. They were born near Boston. Before my mother was born, in the days when Chicago had about one hundred and fifty houses, they

became pioneers and went to settle in what was then considered the West. They loved to tell about the gorgeous waggon painted yellow, with wild animals, lions and tigers, in brilliant red on the sides of this box on wheels which served as vehicle and fortress during a journey of months. My mother was sent to the East to be educated. She married in the East; I, her daughter, have made a third migration: I live now in New York, now in Rome, now in Paris. To use the expression of one of your French writers, we are uprooted, *déracinés*, at every generation. Add to this fact the appalling rapidity with which things change and evolve in America, ideas, customs, people, and you will understand why our mothers have so comparatively little influence on our brains and our hearts. In your country I have met elderly women, of the French aristocracy, who had, as it were, one foot in the eighteenth century. When they sum up their lives, they conclude 'that the world has changed very little since they were young.'

"Now, what prophet, I ask you, can be obtained by a young girl born in one of the fine houses near Lincoln Park, opposite Lake Michigan, when she considers the experience of a grandmother who knew Chicago as a collection of a hundred roofs, not more. She is amused for a moment by the story of the waggon painted yellow with lions in brilliant red, but it would never occur to her to ask advice from the person who travelled in this waggon, and who knows nothing of modern conditions, — and our mothers, not of course so archaic, are nevertheless, to use a slang expression that exactly describes it, not in the 'swim.' We have had no time to form traditions in America, and the reasons why our mothers don't dare force upon us an opinion of which they are not altogether sure, are exactly the same reasons which prevent us girls from submitting ourselves to this opinion. The mother and the daughter were not brought up to drink the same sterilised milk, to walk in the same way, to read in the same manner— and so on. It is not in the older generation

that the young girl finds support and advice, it is first of all in herself, and then in the young people of her own generation, who, trained after the same methods as she, have had the same experiences, and drawn from them the same profit, suffered in them the same defeats."

Chapter X

SOME AMERICAN CUSTOMS

I HAVE spent much time in observing the little American girls. Often I have followed them, listened to them, on the sly, lest their suspicion be aroused, as they went all alone, not more than twelve years old, back and forth from the house to school, in the big cities, and in the country towns. Children of the same fortune and social position in France would have their mothers or a governess, or at least a maid, with them. This person in whom is confided the moral and material welfare of the child represents the bond which binds the young girl to the maternal home until the day of her marriage. It is an outward evidence of the tradition which guides the child at every step. The little American girl, on the other hand, is mistress of herself from the moment she has closed the door of her

home behind her. She is confided to nobody's care but her own. This independence, like all human institutions, has its good and its bad side.

There is one point, for example, which is closely supervised by the parents in Latin and Catholic countries: the chapter of intimate friends. It is not only for purely worldly reasons, but for serious moral and religious considerations that the mothers and fathers wish to know all about the friendships that may spring up between their daughters and their schoolmates. As a general rule, a well-bred girl has nothing to do with any children who are not the daughters of her mother's friends. It is important that they should not see people differently brought up from themselves. They should reflect the *milieu* in which they belong, with all its subtleties, all its prejudices, even the most ridiculous.

I asked certain little American girls of about fifteen years old, how they picked out their friends. They answered:

"When you go to school with a girl you

get to know her. You choose the ones you like best for your friends. The teacher does n't interfere, and neither does your mother. They selected their own friends just the same way without consulting us."

"And these friends, do you invite them to the house to tea? Do you go to see them?"

"If our mothers don't know each other, we don't go to their houses and we don't ask them to ours. But we meet them in the afternoon and go for a walk together, and we take turns going home with each other when school is out."

It is not unheard of to walk home, or go to play in the afternoon with a boy one's own age. I had a friend of thirteen who went every day on his bicycle to get a little girl companion in very short skirts. She also rode on a wheel. They took a turn together around the park, and then very solemnly they sat down opposite each other in a cake shop, and it was the boy of course who treated his young friend. For several days I noticed the boy on his machine

"speeding" alone under my windows. I knew something was up, so very indiscreetly I asked:

"Well, Arthur, how is Edith?"

He answered determinedly:

"It's all over with her."

"What has she done?"

"She broke her promise two days in succession. I found her in the cake store eating ice cream with another boy. And she'd never heard of that cake store until I took her there."

The affair seemed so serious that I wanted to hear Edith's side of the question. She didn't in the least mind stating the facts to me. She was as indignant at the idea that the young bicyclist expected to keep her to himself as she was at his daring to prevent her from going to the cake store with a pedestrian of her choosing.

"Arthur and I are not engaged," she declared. "He said he'd like to bicycle ride with me; he does n't know a girl who can coast downhill as fast as I can without a break. I went out with him for a whole month.

Now I am tired of the bicycle; I'd rather walk. I go out with another boy. I suppose I have a right to, haven't I? I'm a free-born American girl."

"Of course you have a right, Edith, but are you sure you haven't been rather a coquette with Arthur?"

At this word coquette, which under similar conditions in France would have provoked a smile, Edith frowned.

"Nobody," she announced in an injured tone, "has a right to say Edith is a coquette. I like bicycling, I like walking, I like ice cream and I like to receive attention. I choose to spend my time sometimes with one, sometimes with another. No boy could be idiot enough to think because I went to walk with him, or ate cake with him that I must be engaged to him. If that's the way he looks upon our friendship he can go to walk alone, and eat cakes with anybody he wants to. He can't wheel beside me any more, nor treat me to anything. If I let him go on after what has happened, then I would be a coquette sure enough. But American girls

are not coquettes, Monsieur. They like to have a good time and not be bothered with whomever they happen to pick out."

It is often justly said that the observation of the child is the most precious of all contributions to the study of human psychology. The explanation given by Edith enlightened me more than the reading of many novels, or the half-hearted responses of my young lady friends regarding the influences exercised upon the American girl by the race, breeding and education of her country.

In Norway I had already heard of the "well-rounded self" (this is the expression they use in the north) which the male and female followers of Ibsen consider it a necessity, a sort of duty, a unique duty, in fact, to develop. By this "self," as well rounded as a billiard ball, they mean a "self" on whom no one has any purchase, whom no one can use as a patient brick to help build the foundations of a social structure. This "well-rounded self" is a brilliant and changeable force. It knows no laws except that of gravitation — in other words, the tyranny of its own egoism.

This worship of self, raised to the standard of a moral principle, is the outcome of the absolute independence wherein the American girl is brought up by her family, an independence sanctioned by certain peculiar conditions in the evolution of the race. At a time very important in the lives of the maidens *outre mer*, they call it their *début*, this worship is displayed with an *éclat* which (my sincerity, affectionate as it is, obliges me to say it plainly) shocks certain worthy sentiments of refinement we have.

My stupefaction was unfeigned the first time I saw in one of the popular newspapers the full-page portraits of four or five young girls, in low-neck dresses, with pearl necklaces. Although there was a decided boldness in their appearance, I felt sure that they were not actresses. The true innocence of youth was depicted on their faces, in their slender throats, on their pure, proud foreheads. The text accompanying these pictures, which I was so surprised at, was very explicit. Before me were represented the unmarried daughters of the most important

politicians and financiers in the town. They were about to "come out," to make their *début*. They had been photographed in the gowns made for the occasion by some well-known dressmaker. They were exhibited before the eyes of the public, like valuable flowers brought before the jury in a horticultural show. I am not exaggerating; the article, like many others I have read since, stated baldly that one of the girls was "a great favourite." It went into details about the type of beauty of each one, about her character, about her intelligence, and her gifts as a sport. Anybody in the street could buy these portraits for a cent and stick them up with four pins on the wall of his room. The proof that the public, thus far confided in, felt the right to an opinion on the subject of these society rivals, was promptly furnished. I was in a street car, seated next to two wretched-looking men who smelt strongly of whiskey and dirt. Their mouths were full of tobacco juice; an occasional glance at the notice posted up in the car was all that kept them from inundat-

ing us. One of them had bought the same paper I had of the newsboy. He and his companion were examining the portraits of the four *débutantes*. Suddenly he declared:

"Say, Alice is my girl ——"

I could not suppress a feeling of disgust at hearing him mix up the name of a young girl with the tobacco juice he was gulping down. I thought of the proverb, old and wise, which says you must not cast "margaritas ante porcos."

That evening I mentioned my astonishment and disgust to a true woman of the world who knows her own country and mine by heart.

"These *débuts*," I said, "which are written up for the public, announced in the papers, explicitly illustrated, with flattering biographies, are reserved in France for actresses. You could not get a society woman — let alone the young girls — to let a magazine, even under the pretext of sport, reproduce her picture. Publicity is left to those who make their living out of the public; and on the stage there are women, as

refined as Madame Bartet, for example, of the Comédie Française, whose photograph you could n't find for sale if you hunted all Paris over. Supposing that a girl had saved somebody's life at the risk of her own, you could n't keep the papers from mentioning it, but if the young girl in question were to give her picture to be reproduced she would be looked upon with disfavour by society people. They would call it *cabotinage*. The same argument holds good with you as with us. Your girls have no more opportunity than ours to distinguish themselves by any one act of moral or social importance. It is money, and nothing but money, that determines which girls shall have a right to claim public attention for their *débuts*, which girls shall see themselves sold for three cents to the crowd. It would seem as though it must create, among otherwise charming girls, an unfortunate display of vanity and rivalry, and that I was justified when the disgusting man next me in the street car called Mademoiselle Alice by her first name."

Mrs. W—— answered:

"You forget that in the old countries on the continent they publish not only the portraits of actresses in the illustrated magazines, but the portraits of queens and princesses. Our girls, I heard you admit it yourself, one day when you were in a better humour, our girls are princesses. And so we offer their charming faces to the public admiration. The public sees in them the year's harvest of grace and beauty of which America is so proud. The men you saw in the car disgusted you by their familiarity; they were undoubtedly coarse, but I know the men of my country; in their way of looking at those pictures there was nothing insinuating, as there would be in the men of another country, which makes the whole thing impossible elsewhere."

"And yet," I answered, "I read that 'a committee had been formed of American women who wished to oppose in every way possible the deplorable license given to modern advertising.' 'The woman's body,' they say in their bye-laws, 'is the property of the woman. We do not admit that it

shall be exhibited, dressed or not, to make an advertisement attractive.' I can't tell you how glad I was when I heard of such a league being founded. The feminine figure displayed on the walls is one of the plagues in the Paris streets. Every time they sell a new soap, or put a new soup on the market, another more or less *décolletée* lady smiles down upon the passers-by from the setting of a poster. It is not so bad in America, and yet, pasted on all the walls of the big cities just now, there is a low-necked lady standing beside an enormous bottle. She seems to be presenting it to the public, like the husband of her choice. The committee of whom I speak, will certainly take measures against this outrage. Now if they argue that the reproduction of the woman's body is something which women have a right to control, the time is not far off when they will agree that in America, as elsewhere, the features of a young girl are even more emphatically private property which should not be displayed to the eyes of all."

"And this proves to you," Mrs. W——

answered, smiling, "that one should suspend judgment before formulating too severe or too flattering an opinion about our American customs. Everything with us is so new! The current changes one way or another before one has had time to direct it. When we have got on the wrong track, we retrace our steps with a liberty of thought unknown in the countries where tradition rules supreme. If success promises to justify an effort we forge ahead with an ardour which the experience of an old race would necessarily look upon as rash."

Chapter XI

THE THIRD SEX

LIKE George William Curtis, I am very much fascinated by the beautiful Aurelia. Frequently during the past month I have had the "inexpressible pleasure of dining with her and even of sitting by her side."[1] I often stop to enjoy the "vision of many beautiful Aurelias, driving to dinner along the avenue." I also "strain my eyes in at the carriage windows to see their cheerful faces as they pass." I monopolise my neighbours at table in the boldest way, and at the risk of being considered absurd I ask questions that make them laugh.

"When one day you are weary, my dear Aurelia, of captivating the hearts of men, of winning them away from others, keeping them all for yourself, will you end by making a choice?"

[1] Prue and I.

Half the time Aurelia purses up her lips and answers:

"Do I look so much like an old maid? How old do you suppose I am?"

I glance with unfeigned admiration at Aurelia's clear-cut profile, but I notice also that there are a few little crows' feet on her camellia skin, that her first youth has been faded in the light of the midnight oil. I remember that this fatigue is even more noticeable when you meet Aurelia, not under lamp-light filtered through a pink silk shade, but on the street in the open air.

I invariably answer:

"I think you are twenty, Aurelia. . . ."

But in the depths of my heart I add:

"And five or six winters to boot."

I don't know whether Aurelia makes the same observation "when she looks at the vast mirror and surveys her form at length in the Psyche glass." I am quite sure that she has no anxiety about her future. She can marry the very first day she consents to say "Yes."

"When?"

"Why, when I have found a man whom I can love."

"And this you have never done?"

"Never seriously."

"You are perhaps too hard to suit?"

"Or perhaps the men I know have not found the words to touch my heart. Their cravats are irreproachable, their shirt-fronts are like porcelain, their boots have a polish like Japanese bronze. They are sad when it rains, delighted when the weather is fair. 'What a beautiful day, Miss Aurelia.' 'Beautiful.' This does not sink very deep into the heart, and as I am capable of finding out such truths about the weather without anybody's help, I will probably continue in single-blessedness for some time to come. Who knows, perhaps for ever."

I grieve to think that such a charming person as Aurelia will finish her existence without gladdening our old age by a daughter who resembles her. I try to convert her to my Latin ideas that marriage is an obligation for all women, particularly for those who have her grace and her comeliness.

"Aurelia," I ask, "have you ever visited, in Paris or in London, the exhibitions of women painters and sculptors which are so much the fashion? . . . Yes? Well, let me call your attention to something I have noticed. The majority of the women painters and sculptors are spinsters; for some economic, plastic or sentimental reason they have not married. So they seek either consolation or a living in the practice of the arts. What subject do you think these girl artists paint most often?"

"Flowers, vegetables, landscapes, rabbits, kittens."

"No, Aurelia. . . . They paint the portraits of men, they model the busts of men."

"There they show their bad taste!"

"I am not provoking a discussion, I am simply stating a fact. And the extraordinary thing is this, all of the men's portraits look alike."

"The brunettes and the blonds? The notaries and the young actors?"

"All of them. And this unique personage whom the women of England, of Ger-

many, of France, perceive in the commonest model is the most composite masculine type their fancy can construct."

"What do you mean?"

"He has the essential characteristics of a toreador, a tenor, the Archangel Saint Michael. He unites, as best he can, grace and violence, kindness and cruelty, good and evil, the human and the divine."

"He is a monstrosity!"

"He is an ideal . . . a girl's ideal. Your own ideal, Aurelia, say what you may. He is their chimera that floats between you and all the poor men who are alarmed by your scornful manner, who, for fear of not agreeing with you, talk naïvely about the weather."

As I expected, Aurelia at this statement is quite beside herself.

"So," she said, "women according to you are ninnies?"

"No, Aurelia. They are poets. They have wings to soar above the earth. These wings we lack. They leave us poor men to dirty our polished boots in the mud of the

city streets. They take flight into the clouds in search of the absolute."

Aurelia has become dreamy:

"If what you say is true," she begins, "it is not surprising that men and women so seldom meet on common ground. Their natural tendency is to follow out their own ways, which are not the same, as you have just shown."

If ever Aurelia cared to hear me to the end, I would tell her all that is in my mind. There is a moment in life when the two halves of humanity can be linked one to the other. It is before the young girl has unfolded her wings, before she has tried her solitary flight heavenward. But the education of Aurelia does not permit her to greet this common-sense truth with the favour it deserves. I once heard her refer with slight scorn to the girls whose natures and tastes predestined them to an early marriage.

"Why," she said haughtily, "you can tell when you are still in the school-room which of your class-mates will marry as soon as they shut up their school-books. They are

not the *élite*, I assure you. They are the vainest, the most coquettish and the ones who care most about clothes and jewellery. And they always stand the worst in the class."

I note this last reproach. It is addressed by Aurelia to the young misses who hope to become Mrs. For, over the majority of young girls in the United States, learning has greater power of attraction than love.

In order to understand, I oblige myself to assume for a moment the psychology of a young American girl. She has just left the normal school and returned to the parental roof. This may be in a little town, or in the country ; everybody does not live in New York, Chicago, Boston, Washington. Everybody is not the daughter of a well-to-do father who can send his children to amuse themselves in the capitals of the old world, or for a trip up the Nile to the first cataract. The young American girl who has just returned home does not, as the German or the French girl would, occupy herself with housekeeping. If she chances

to give the servants an order that upsets all those her mother has given, but which is nevertheless hurriedly put into execution, it is because some passing fancy seized her, not because she assumes the burden as a regular task. She was very much absorbed in her studies at school. The daily intercourse with girls of her own age was a source of diversion for her. If she were a French girl, from this moment on, all her ideas would be centred in her expectations of a near marriage.

The American has neither this haste nor this preoccupation. She wonders how she is going to occupy the years to come. Her mother is not a companion with whom she can talk, her father is always away from home. When he returns he brings no echo of the outside world. Her brothers are at college, or in business. They are making a way in life. Society in a small place does not amount to much. So, under the circumstances, it is very natural that all the regrets, all the hopes of the young girl should once more turn to her beloved

studies, which have been the most substantial pleasure she has known up to this time.

She begins to talk of finishing her education at college. If the father can afford the necessary sum he does not long resist his daughter's request. He will not give her a *dot;* he will die before she does; he does not know what will be the condition of his affairs nor his state of mind when he does die. He owes his daughter the chance to make her own living. A good education is the shortest way to ensure this chance. The girl goes off to college. It means a separation from her family for three or four years. In the holidays she makes visits or travels to rest her mind after the efforts of the winter. From the day when she enters college until the hour she leaves it, there is, so to speak, no further contact between the family influence and her individual evolution.

With a friendly interest I went through a great number of the colleges where the American girl receives this higher education, which places them very much above the

average man in intellectual culture. These universities may be considered from two points of view: from the point of view of the momentary personal happiness they offer to the girls who attend them, or from the point of view of the ultimate social outcome which shall be reaped from such excessive cultivation.

Regarding the first point of view there is no hesitation possible: the American girl gets pleasures at college that she could not have known at home, that she will not find later in society.

These colleges, gay, delightful, surrounded by woods and lakes and superb stretches of country, are for the youth assembled in them, a veritable resurrection of Eden. Not the mind alone is nourished, the body also is fortified: the love of independence, which is at the root of the American soul, the source of all feeling, of all thought, is here given full sway to develop without encountering any obstacle.

In the choice of subjects the girls select freely whatever their own taste suggests, the

rest they leave aside. In friendships it is the same thing. The usual type of apartment is a small sitting-room into which open two bedrooms. The sitting-room is shared by both girls. Nobody interferes with the choice they make of a room-mate. Nobody feels at liberty to criticise their enthusiasms. If they wish to discuss their ideas and sentiments, politics, etc., in a more general way than they can at their own firesides, there is a club hall where they can fancy they are discussing, not like girls, making their first attempts at eloquence, but like wise senators, very well up in parliamentary laws and regulations. Whether it be a question of learning, of abstract thought, of morals, of law, these gracious conversationalists feel themselves entirely cut loose from any weight of responsibility. There is no need to apply the resolutions they adopt, to judge them for their practical soundness. They are simply ideas that they cherish, and that they make triumph *per se*. In exactly the same way the sentiments, the friendships, with which they fill their hearts at

college are prized for the joy they bring, and not judged from a point of view of profit.

I was the pleased and grateful guest at these colleges; cheered by the happiness that reigns supreme in them, I always left them with the peculiar sadness one feels in seeing a too complete joy, when it would seem as though a voice were murmuring in one's ear: remember that true happiness is not of this world. The sight of it is merely a passing vision.

And in truth the law of life is that none shall escape the responsibilities of his condition, of his place in the world; that dreams must be sacrificed to reality, speculation to activity, haphazard affections to fruitful attachments, egoism to altruism, the individual to the masses. To accomplish this, college life is a poor preparation for a girl in America or elsewhere.

"We shall always have plenty of nuns," said Père La Chaise, the confessor of Louis XIV. in the middle of the seventeenth century, "we shall never have enough good mothers."

The seventeenth-century convents had a tendency to make nuns of the girls, and even the Jesuits complained of this; the American college has a tendency to turn out a particular sort of woman whom I ask leave to call the third sex. Her passage upon earth is a loss for mankind, and those who meditate upon the destiny of the nation are beginning to realise it.

"Where," you may ask, "do you expect the women who intend to become teachers to get the necessary tuition?" It goes without saying that colleges were invented to graduate teachers. In training the mind and character of young children a woman finds full play for her feminine gifts. She is marvellously fitted, to my thinking more so than man, for teaching girls. Men should no more learn to think as women do, than women should mould their thoughts and their natures after the pattern of the masculine temperament. Teaching, for the woman who does not marry, permits her a sort of moral maternity for which she is richly gifted. One bows with respectful

admiration before this kind of maternity, but only on condition that it shall not be held up as superior to the other kind; that it shall not be presented as nobler for the individual woman who exercises it, and as more useful for society in general.

Now it has been established by certain documents published in the United States that women's colleges in all countries the world over are huge sterilisers. I asked the director of an important girls' college where I had been received with infinite good grace if he knew what became later in life of the young girls whom I had just seen so radiantly happy.

He answered:

"It is easy to find out. They publish every year a *Class Bulletin* in which the girls all answer in a few words this same question: 'What have you done since you left college?'"

"Have you a recent edition of this interesting statistic?"

"Here is the 1900 bulletin. . . . It could not be much more recent. Shall we look

over it together, this plain statement of the truth?"

We ran through it, and here are the results of our search. I offer them to the serious consideration of all.

The question was put to one hundred and twenty-five or one hundred and thirty girls. (Four or five of them did not respond.) Out of the number thirty-nine declared that they were teaching in a primary or a high school, science or literature, to girls or boys. Forty had returned to the parental roof. A few fill the void in their lives by cultivating in a more or less lax manner the arts, painting or music. Others are only amusing themselves.

"I am staying at home with my family and doing no special work."

"I made my *début* in November."

One is member of an athletic club, "coaching basket ball teams," another of a "Students' Aid Society," or a "Philanthropic Committee," or a "Sunday School," or a "District Nursing Society." Only nine of these college girls have the courage to declare that they are preparing for their rôle of do-

mestic responsibilities, studying "housekeeping" or "domestic science." It would seem as though they were afraid of being jeered at if they announced this fact to the thirteen class-mates who want to become regular blue stockings and who are devoting themselves to scientific studies toward which the college training was a mere first step, or to the twelve children of fortune who are travelling in Europe, Paris, Rome, etc., for their own pleasure or to perfect themselves in a knowledge of arts. And what woman, to be sure, would dare speak of cooking, of the science so feminine above all others, the study of domestic economy, before a young person who announces to you with a flash of triumphant pride that is rasping:

"I have been acting as stockbroker for the W—— S—— M—— Company at its Boston office and recently I have been promoted as fiscal agent in that company. So far as I know I am the first woman in a position of this kind in Boston."

Such a success overshadows the five young girls who are secretaries, librarians, and the

four or five whose fathers have taken them into their offices. There is something pleasing in the idea of father and daughter working together, but the world must go on, and one would rather see if one loves the glorious activity, the progressive spirit which is the corner-stone of the United States, one would, I say, rather see a number of these superior girls seated at home by the side of a young husband with a flock of children at their knees, in the folds of their gowns. This is a dream we must abandon. Out of the one hundred and twenty-five to one hundred and thirty girls whose confessions I have just read, two only are married.

"But undoubtedly a lot of them are engaged?"

One.

The years spent in thoughtful or unprofitable study are doubtless lost to the purposes of maternity. But worse than this, these studies, which the girl students have pursued in colleges, are beyond the capacity of their sex, they impair their chances of fulfilling their part in the divine plan upon earth.

I have been the confidant of an American scientist whose words ring out in the anxious silence of all American-born Americans whose origins go back to the stirring past of their country and who are preoccupied now about its future.

"A higher sterility, in fact, higher than among any other group," says Mr. George J. Engelman, M.D.,[1] "is attained by the college graduates, of whom comparatively few marry, and a large proportion of those who do marry are barren, 33.7 per cent as reported in the investigation of 1885, and 20.5 per cent in 1900, averaging 27.3 per cent."

"But are you sure, Doctor, that we must hold responsible for this blight the overwork of the feminine brain in studies pursued at college? Could not such sterility be attributed to some exterior cause, difficult to perceive?"

The scholar responds:

"Don't seek an excuse in the peculiarities

[1] (The increasing sterility of American women: from the *Journal of the American Medical Association*, October 5, 1901.)

of American life. It is the strain of college life which is the sole cause. If you consult English statistics you will find the following proportions in the cases of sterility: 16.4 per cent among British peeresses, only 9.6 per cent among a similar number of English villagers, but among English college women and alumnæ it is 27.6 per cent, as it is among their American sisters."

"Are n't you afraid, Doctor, that the women who have a passion for learning will accuse these figures of being exaggerated by prejudice?"

"I would refer them to a study published by one of their own kind, Mrs. Smith, not this time on the absolute sterility of the women who have been through college, but on their low fecundity.

"There we find the very lowest 1.3 and 1.8 children to the marriage, an average of 1.6, which is corroborated by a similar group of women who have continued their studies longer, who have taken the advanced degrees, mostly Ph. D. with 1.6 and by English college women with 1.5.

"I have often heard it affirmed by women who wanted to oust man from his position of intellectual and physical superiority, that this superiority was not the outcome of natural or cultivated will-power, but simply the result of the long servitude to which they have submitted women.

"'If,' say these rebellious spirits, 'instead of shutting up woman in *gynécées*, in harems and in nurseries, they had given her for centuries the chance of educating herself, of perfecting her natural gifts, she would now be man's equal in strength.'"

I hold an altogether different opinion from Doctor Engelman on this subject. I have not formulated it in a discussion at my club nor by inductive reasoning, but by the direct contact with life. In travelling I chanced to visit a region little known and partly unexplored. In fact, I refer to the vast stretches of land which extend from the highway of Abyssinia, Egypt, and Soudan.

One meets divers populations, some of which are as old as man himself. I lived among the Wallamo, a tribe who have not

even got a word to express the idea of God; among the people of Galla in the west, who worship the line of the horizon; above all, among the robust, ferocious negroes, Beni-Changouls who never take the trouble to light a fire, and who live in the swamps, feeding on rats toasted in the sun. One cannot say seriously that in such countries man has any means whatever for studying sciences from which women are excluded. Yet the difference here is extraordinary from a point of view of physique, of size, and of intelligence, between the man and the woman who live side by side like the two natural mates of primitive species. At each new generation the woman gives her flesh and bones to create a child; thus she lessens her own strength, she undergoes a diminution which heredity perpetuates in the "species" woman, while the lance-thrusts and the horrible mutilations received by the warriors in combat remain simply accidents to the individual and do not become fixed in the "species" man.

I once heard a celebrated physiologist of

the Paris Medical Faculty predict with admirable penetration the destiny of the learned women whose apparition is heralded.

"You all know," he said, "that it is impossible to produce movement without heat. Thought is a movement. The influx of blood to the brain facilitates this movement. Try to work when the circulation is active elsewhere, for example, in the stomach, to aid the movement of the digestion. One of two things is sure to happen: either the blood refuses to respond to your call, and then you suffer a momentary anæmia of the brain, you fall asleep over your book; or else the blood will go to your head as you desire and your digestion will be interrupted; all day you will have an unbearable weight on your stomach. The woman, who without taking into account the especial requirements of her nature, wishes constantly to direct toward her brain this effort of rapid circulation which ensures the easy movement of thought, this woman disturbs radically the laws of her organism. In the same way that the man who reads and works with his

brain on leaving the table ruins his stomach, the woman destroys the chance she had of accomplishing later, through maternity, her natural destiny."

A woman's rights newspaper had sent a reporter to this lecture. The next day she published an account of the lecture with a few indignant comments.

"What difference does it make, after all," she wrote, "if the woman become sterile, provided her faculties progress. It is an outrage to forbid her the effort of thinking under pretext that it diverts her from the effort of maternity!"

The old professor did not admit that he was beaten. He responded a few days later: "It makes so much difference that the same effort which destroys fecundity in the woman upsets not only the nature of things, but it goes contrary to the evolution of civilisations. History proves that every endeavour which has had the selfishness of the individual and not society at large for its end, has been evil and short-lived. Now what interest can you expect me to take, me

representing society, in this struggle of the learned and sterile woman, since she cannot repeat herself in any offspring which will perpetuate this so-called progress in the 'species' woman. You may try to unsettle me by referring to the 'drones' which nature has placed in bee-hives and ant-hills, or to the innumerable nuns and monks sterilised by the vows of chastity who during the middle ages absolutely rescued civilisation from ruin. To these two arguments I respond calmly.

"It was not with an idea of perfecting the 'drone' itself that nature made sexless ants and sexless bees. Their barrenness is not a privilege, it is a burden. They are created and put into the world to be the humble servants of the fruitful members, to facilitate, by the work they do, the development, the propagation of life.

"As for the nuns and the monks who filled the convents in the middle ages, it was not for themselves, for their pride and their egoism, that they sacrificed the chances of being mothers and fathers. They devoted themselves to the masses, to their 'neigh-

bour,' as they expressed it. Perishing under the onslaught of barbarity, they did not escape from motherhood and fatherhood as from a bondage: they renounced it as a joy."

The whole discussion can be resumed in three words: Is Motherhood a bondage or a joy for woman?

Does the individual owe more to society or to himself?

History answers:

"To society."

The third sex answers:

"To oneself."

Chapter XII

IN MARRIAGE

THE third sex in the United States as elsewhere is a new monstrosity. I need only close my eyes to wake the memory of certain American men and women of a type altogether different from the modern figures I have jotted down on my note-book as I ran across them.

My mind goes back twenty-five or thirty years to the time when my grandfather was still living. He was a ship-owner and a cotton merchant. His sailing vessels traversed the ocean to return with their valuable cargo of cotton. Every year we used to have the pleasure of receiving as our guests the Americans who had been doing business with my grandfather for a generation or more. Sometimes their wives, their sons, their daughters, came with them. To be sure, it took longer to cross the sea in those

days, but there was scarcely a well-born American who did not look upon a trip to Europe, and to Paris especially, as the finishing touch to his education.

No one could have helped being charmed and even touched by the gallant attention these American husbands paid their wives, by the tenderness they received in return. These gray-haired couples were the very models of conjugal bliss. We had no false illusions then, nor have we now, as to what that bliss means, but these husbands from over the ocean seemed to give out a peculiar atmosphere of dignity, of calm, of kindliness. If with us such tenderness be more chalarous it is certainly never more radiant.

Since then I have read the works of American authors, novelists, essayists, etc., who picture the same sunny characters of which I speak. In the writings of George William Curtis, John Bigelow, James Russell Lowell, one sees an American society far more aristocratic than that of to-day, living in great ease and comfort, but not mad about luxury, not upheaved yearly by the gym-

nastics of Wall Street, as though suspended over a volcano. There is a total absence among them of the horribly vulgar sort that come suddenly to the surface while the families who have both ancestors and culture to boast of are dashed into the depths of ruin.

The outcome was that this older society of fifty or seventy years ago had time to acquaint themselves with their new surroundings. They no longer appeared ill at ease, as though luxury and refinement were a livery bought ready-made, but rather a garment made to order.

Here and there, in certain cities, in certain country houses, I find the last survivors of this generation. I see everything in them that I loved, admired, and respected when I was a child, everything which in my later years represents an ideal society to me.

At the present moment I am staying near X—— with one of these elderly couples. They used to know my parents. Mrs. T—— is still beautiful. Her gray hair ripples still, as when her head was crowned with gold. This morning she took me for

a drive along the river, in a buggy. The warm spring sunshine awakened the earth about us to life and our hearts to long-ago memories. With a simplicity that was charming she told me how she and Mr. T—— had started out in life.

"We were very poor," she said, "both my husband and I. We had scarcely a thousand dollars a year to live on. . . ."

Mr. A——, who to-day is director of one of the biggest life insurance companies in the United States, began life under similar conditions: it was not the exception, but the rule in those days.

This semi-poverty was not a pretext for this happy couple to limit the number of their children: they had five sons and four daughters. Exactly as in France the dream of the mother and the father was to keep their family together as long as possible.

"If we had only had the pleasure of seeing you in New York," Mrs. T—— said to me, "we would have showed you something that Mr. T—— and I are very proud of: our children and grandchildren all together

for a 'Sunday night supper' just as in the days of your grandfather. Family ties are stronger than you think in America!"

Fearing to cast a shadow on this brilliant spring morning, I asked, somewhat timidly:

"When your sons and daughters are grandfathers and grandmothers in turn do you suppose that they will have the same joy at being surrounded by their families?"

Mrs. T—— sighed and said:

"My husband and I struggled side by side when we were young. I realised what an effort he was obliged to make day by day. We blessed this effort, since it brought us so much happiness! . . . And yet my husband and I have always tried to spare our children. We have kept for ourselves the hardships, the difficulties, we know so well. Sometimes I think we have made a mistake. It is better not to have too many illusions in life, nor too much egoism in marrying."

Mrs. T—— alluded evidently to a certain anxiety that possesses her when during a Sunday night supper she sees, at a glance,

the restlessness expressed on the young faces about her. But, fearing that to a foreigner like myself her regret may appear to be a reproach, she adds quickly:

"Society when I was young made it much easier than it does nowadays for young couples. It encouraged simplicity. It did not approve of those who lived beyond their means. It did not, as it does now, separate the husband from the wife."

I remarked how dangerous a peril this seemed to me, and, truly astonished, I asked: "Do you mean that the American husbands of your generation initiated their wives into the secrets of their business affairs?"

Mrs. T—— answered very decidedly:

"There was no one living in whom my husband confided as he did in me. Our hopes for this life and the life to come we shared in common. Sunday we went to the same church. He always went with me, and we took all the children. The foundation of our happiness was his devotion for me, my gratitude to him, our love for each other.

We were indifferent as to what the world thought of our joy. This is perhaps one reason why it has lasted and still lasts."

I may add that the love of this couple, over sixty years old, keeps all the freshness of youth. This morning my window was open and I could hear the husband and wife talking together on the porch; to judge by the gentleness of his voice, his courtesy, the gaiety with which she responded, I would have taken them for a young couple whose happiness is just beginning rather than two old people who have traversed life together.

The children smile with a mixture of malice and envy at this perfect understanding between their parents.

"One of Mrs. T——'s daughters said to me the other day: Mamma and papa think they enjoy nothing so much as being with all of us in New York. They're so mistaken! The real joy of their lives is to live side by side in the country, and to sit on the verandah together and look at the moon!"

Mrs. T—— in referring to this daughter Gladys had told me that she was very hap-

pily married, and so I felt free in questioning the second generation as to its opinions regarding the happiness of the first. Gladys responded:

"Yes, of course I am happy, but not at all in the same way as my parents!"

"You say it with a sigh!"

"Things have changed so entirely. Mamma has told you perhaps that she and papa started out on a thousand dollars a year? . . ."

"Yes, and that most of her friends had an equally modest sum to live on."

"I need forty thousand a year."

"You could get on with less."

"It is not possible. There is an enforced luxury in society to-day. A man who is in business, like my husband, must have credit. Rich people only can claim this credit, and how do you expect people to know you are rich if you don't spend money freely?"

"Your husband approves, I suppose?"

"I presume so. We hardly ever speak of these things.'

"Why?"

"He never has time."

"In whom does he confide, then, his hopes, his anxieties?"

"His business partner."

"You? . . . Are you not your husband's partner?"

"No. . . . Mamma was papa's partner. . . . I am minister of foreign affairs and of the interior for my husband; it's quite enough, I assure you! lots of women would not take even that much trouble."

"You will have to wait until you are old, then, to sit down hand in hand with the man you love under the melancholy light of the moon?"

"Oh! my husband and I will never look at the moon. To begin with, the married couples of my generation will never grow old side by side."

"What happens to them, then?"

"More than half the time the husband dies young, worn out by business."

"And the wife?"

"If her husband has left her anything she

finishes her life as best she can without her husband and without her children either, for nowadays each one goes his own way. We have seen the last of the 'Sunday night suppers.' If the husband dies without leaving a cent, and if the woman has no money of her own, there is only one thing for her to do: disappear."

"And this," I asked, "is the spectre that lurks in the shadows of the happy marriage? I dread to think of the unhappy ones of which I have numerous examples before me."

Almost always it is the woman who is responsible for the bankruptcy. She has failed to understand her rôle as vestal guardian of the hearth. Not minister of the interior she! She is ready to help him on one point only, the chapter of expenses for clothes and amusements, made in order to impress the gallery with his commercial prosperity. I must confess that more than once I was somewhat scandalised at the couples who sat next me on a Saturday night in some of the big restaurants where it is fashionable to take late supper. Pari-

sian women, no matter to what class they belong, never wear their toilettes, however luxurious, as though they were a harness weighted with gold. They do not show their vain anxiety to outshine the women around them. They do not think that because a thing is extravagant it must be becoming. They leave for the *demi-mondaines* the loud toilettes, the plumes and furbelows which dazzle the attention without satisfying the taste. Above all, they do not affect a sort of contempt for the husband who accompanies them, a silence, an absolute indifference, which is the usual revenge of those in whom humility replaces virtue sold at a given price. The gaiety, the graciousness, at least superficial, the interchange of courteous conversation, are a part of one's education, of one's self-respect, and of the consideration demanded by the French husband.

"One of the fundamental differences," wrote Balzac, "between the courtesan and the virtuous woman is good humour. Not the good humour that is affected, but that overflows naturally from the soul."

This good humour is almost always lacking in the faces of the women whom I have observed in the midst of their pleasures. This charming smile is replaced by a look of habitual discontentment, which in the end marks, like a blight, faces that would otherwise be young and beautiful. Their very gestures betray the secret restlessness within.

Between these men and these women who married one day, as they thought, for love, love no longer exists. There is no longer any harmony even, scarcely mutual toleration. The husbands kill themselves to procure a luxury which the women exact without enjoying. They are commercial partners, they don't understand each other in the least, but they remain together because the business goes well.

Before this expression of weariness so sad to contemplate on any face, I often asked myself:

Have n't these women got children at home whom they love? Maternal love has a wonderful way of softening the heart, when conjugal love has failed.

In France, and in almost all Latin and Catholic countries where marriage is an obligation, it too often happens that this marriage is contracted for purely calculated reasons, in which the heart and the sentiments play little part. The husband may or may not be able to inspire a feeling of tenderness. If he fails, it is to the children that the wife turns with that need to devote herself, to give her whole self to something, which is the natural instinct of woman as long as vanity has not perverted her. And so the young girls who enter into marriage by simple obedience to the law end by reaping a harvest of consolation.

I was talking about this transference of tenderness with an American woman who has lived a long time in France and who is familiar with our customs.

"The women of your country," I asked her, "who have been disillusioned in their marriages, do they find, as with us, sufficient consolation in the exercise of their maternal duties?"

She answered promptly:

"No."

"And why is that?"

"Because in the two countries the women have two opposite ideals in mind when they marry. The ideal of the French girl is the family. So they find for her a companion capable of being a tender and valiant father for the children to come. This feeling is so strong with you that often amongst the *bourgeoisie* I have heard the wives, in a moment of tenderness, call their husbands 'Papa.'"

The American girl thinks of herself. She wants a husband who will adore her. Love is her aim and end. If she does not succeed in attaining it or in keeping to it, her life is a failure.

"Could she not, as in France, find an outlet for her troubled heart by occupying herself in the education of her children?"

"I see what you are arguing toward! You are thinking of the exquisite feeling that exists with you, between mother and son. Your novelists would lead us to believe that the Frenchwoman easily consoles herself for an unhappy marriage by all sorts

of forbidden love affairs. They do her an injustice! The true rival of the husband in the heart of your compatriot is the oldest son. He is rival from the moment when the mother takes him from the nurse, to give him his first bath on her own knees, until the time when she goes proudly through the street leaning on his arm. She treats him, this favourite son, with secret complaisance. She has certain weaknesses for him which she does not even confess to herself. When he was a school-boy she helped him with his lessons; when he becomes a man she still longs to lighten his burdens. She is rewarded for her maternal love by a sort of worship that exists with you from son to mother. For American mothers things are altogether different. Her son is very soon too independent to be under the complete influence of her tenderness for him. It would weigh upon him. Moreover, he would rather be at school than at home. He wants to live with boys of his own age, do what they do, to play the same games. The only discipline he recognises

is at college. At sixteen or seventeen, when he leaves home for business or for a university, he has about broken off with family life. And now I am only speaking of the boy who turns out well. There is another sort as well. You call him the *fils à papa*. He is not only indifferent to the love of his mother; he makes her shed tears of blood. It often happens that the sudden making of tremendous fortunes which lift a family from the depths to the pinnacle of American society produces a very different effect on the brothers and sisters, the sons and daughters: the girls generally make the most of the chances offered them for culture, they become refined. The sons are ruined by the luxury which inundates the household. They remain ignorant and coarse. They go to pieces; they drink, gamble, and the rest."

I have got beyond my first astonishment on arriving, the surprise I felt when Miss R—— received me at her home without presenting me to her parents. Nevertheless I asked:

"And the girls? It would seem to me that without diminishing the independence of her daughters in any matter of importance the American mother might exercise a greater influence in the development of their minds. It is not possible to learn all of life's secrets either in college text-books or from the conversation of other young girls who have had no experience. And it is a consolation to spare those we love the useless trials to which we have ourselves been submitted."

My friend smiled.

"While you were talking," she said, "it seemed to me that I could see the curtain rise at the Théâtre Français on a familiar scene, the salon of a chateau, for example, in the country. The Marquise is bent over the frame that holds a square of tapestry upon which she is working. Her daughters are gathered about her; one is reading aloud, the rest are doing needlework. From time to time the Marquise interrupts to make some reflection which is the *résumé* of her experience. It is a good opening scene for a play, and, in France, where such scenes

are acted in every-day life. The reading aloud and commenting upon a book is, for the young French girl, the finishing touch to a perfect education. Would you like to know what the American girl thinks of this family amusement, this sort of education?"

As she spoke my friend took up a volume lying on the table and opened it:

"This," she said, "is a book which has just had a tremendous success in America. Its title alone was sure to please: it promises to the woman of to-day that she shall become economically independent! I have marked a passage here which gives you your answer." She reads:

"The growing individualisation of democratic life brings inevitable change to our daughters as well as to our sons. Girls do not all like to sew; many do not know how. Now, to sit sewing together, instead of being a harmonising process, would generate different degrees of restlessness, of distaste, and of nervous irritation, and as to reading aloud, it is not so easy now to choose a book that

a well-educated family of modern girls and their mother would all enjoy together."

I listened with a feeling of true regret, the author shows so evidently her approval of the "modern girl's" contempt of the humble training in needlework which rests the body and leaves the mind full liberty for thought. I could not refrain from saying:

"There is at least one book that the most modern American girl could read profitably with her mother. It would act as an antidote for such poison as that you have just treated me to."

"What is the name of it?"

"The Economies of Xenophon. All the essentials in the truly feminine science of caring for a house, of making a husband happy, of bringing up children who are a credit to the republic, of maintaining in one's soul the peace that comes through the exercise of the simplest and the noblest qualities, all has been expressed by the Greek philosopher with a veritable understanding of the human heart, with a profound knowl-

edge of life's realities, with a keen penetration into the conditions that constitute happiness. No commentary of the modern pedagogues and, above all, no nonsense of haphazard sociologists surpass him. I am confident that the author of the pernicious book you have just been reading has as absolute a contempt for the art of housekeeping as she has for sewing. . . ."

"You may be sure of it. She rings the changes on this one message to the modern woman: 'By what right has man reduced you to the domestic rôle of a housekeeper?' And the American women to-day are only too ready to listen to this sort of thing."

More than once I have thought to myself that if *Home* be an Anglo-Saxon word, the love for the parental roof that one leaves dolefully, and returns to with joy, the *maison* where all the family souvenirs are gathered together, where each piece of furniture has its history, this sort of love is French. Yet there is such a characteristic difference between the absolute taste which the American woman displays in her dress, and the hope-

less combinations wherein her English and German cousins are still floundering, that I exclaimed:

"But do you mean to say that the art of housekeeping does not interest the American woman? Does she take no pleasure in making her home attractive?"

My friend answered:

"Almost all the houses that are built on recently made fortunes are furnished even to the smallest details by the decorators, the professionals who say exactly where the bed, the dressing-table, the chairs, the bric-à-brac, shall be placed, and what colour the curtains shall be, and what stuff the furniture shall be covered with."

"Granted. This can be explained by a very natural timidity. House-furnishing, like dressing, is governed by certain rules of good taste which are not as rigid as the Commandments. One can easily see that a woman who is guided somewhat by her dressmaker in deciding about her clothes, would show the same confidence in her decorator when furnishing her house.

"But there is another domestic art which plays an important part in every-day life: cooking. Do the American women scorn the science, do they find it unworthy their attention?"

My friend laughed.

"Instead of questioning me," she said, "suppose you answer perfectly frankly. What do you think of American cooking?"

"You mean generally speaking, not in the private houses where one's host has a French chef?"

"Yes."

"It is very bad, unpalatable and unwholesome. The meats, which might be so appetising, lose every bit of their taste in the refrigerators. And the food itself is prepared improperly. Instead of putting butter in the sauce, they serve it to you on a small dish beside the meat, the fish and the vegetables. Soup and sauces are put up in bottles warmed over before eating. The other day I read in one of the popular newspapers a first-rate article. It was probably

inspired by the defenders of the beef trust, but the moral was no less precious.

"The working women, it read, complain that the price of meat has gone up. To-day for a dollar they get a piece of tenderloin half the size of what they could get a year ago.

"But there are other parts beside the tenderloin that are fit to eat. And why don't they buy mutton or pork? The truth is that the women don't know how to cook, they don't want to learn either. They send their children to market to buy the meat and to the bakers to have it cooked. The most they can do is to boil a few potatoes. If they would only take a little trouble, and try to find out that there are other pieces besides the tenderloin, they would prepare pork, mutton, boiled beef, stew with a good tasty sauce; the husband's earnings would not be squandered. They would make use of the leavings instead of throwing them out.

"These remarks may be applied to the women who keep boarding-houses as well as

to the majority of restaurants and hotels where one eats *à l'Américain*. And such general ignorance of culinary art produces disastrous effects. Not only the newspapers, but all the landscapes, all the suburbs of the big cities are placarded with patent medicine advertisements, all for the same troubles! Torpid livers, inactive digestions, tired nerves. When the stomach is feeble the brain reacts, the nerves break down. I know that overwork is responsible for half the general nervous exhaustion of the race which makes a man of forty seem old, but poor cooking is, I am sure, to be blamed for the other half of the public's ill health."

My friend had been listening attentively. She answered: "You might include almost all our middle-class and society women in the reproach you direct against the working women. In France the attention a woman gives to the kitchen is a source of health and prosperity to the entire household. A Frenchwoman wants her husband and her husband's friends to partake of home hospitality. She would not like her husband

to take any one to a restaurant for a meal, except, perhaps, some uneducated person whom he was obliged to entertain for purely business reasons. She knows the graciousness, the good cheer, the happy effects of that peculiar animation which is manifest after a good dinner.

"She is sure that a varied and attractive table is a reason daily for her husband to prefer his home to his club, the companionship of his wife to the conversation of business friends. You seldom find the same case with us. You have probably met families here who had shut up their homes and gone to the hotel to live. It is not the husband but the wife who demands this change. She protests that the bother of getting servants, of training them, is too much to endure. She thinks that such material cares should be left for the people of inferior minds who enjoy them. Her ideal would be the establishment of co-operative households, where all the cares of the kitchen would be confided to a steward. In this way the married woman, rid of

housekeeping duties, of the trouble of educating her children, who are all away at school, of the presence of her husband who goes to his club when he is not at his office, could be really free! She would no longer be a mere dependent in the family group, she would become an isolated individual evolving according to the laws of her own egoism, guided by her own will." I glanced at the book which my friend had left open on the table, — without saying anything I ran through the pages.

Under a heap of rubbish, given a scientific turn to hide an ignorance which was almost comic, and affirmations of outrageous boldness, we have here once more the old thesis of the Northern races; the aimless torment of Ibsen's heroines, the sickly nerves of a Hedda Gabler, heredity, exhaustion, a passion for drink, all the phantoms ill defined, and brought together with the vanity innate in every human, and particularly rampant in the woman whose training has not promoted her from her natural rebelliousness to a respect for the law. And behind these

untrue novelties, so poorly resuscitated, I see under the dust of time the thesis of George Sand, in favour of individual rights, all the hollow dreams that have been a hundred times over condemned by the test of civilisation, and which in the United States, as elsewhere, will once more come to nothing.

Sadly I asked:

"And this book, so false, is it merely an object of curiosity, or do people think they can get some new truth out of it?"

This was her answer:

"I know a whole collection of young mothers who read it as they would a Bible. They have the author come to their houses and lecture on her theories."

With a sigh I concluded:

"It is then not only the American family that is in peril, but the home itself which is going to pieces?"

Chapter XIII

WOMEN'S CLUBS

SINCE the American woman, even when married, does not find sufficient occupation to satisfy her in her home, it is quite natural that she should seek elsewhere the full exercise of her faculties in some work suited to her taste.

She goes to a club.

One of these club women said to me:

"You have exactly the same thing in France under another name. What else are the social calls, the visits in which your society women spend their time? You see in their salon, on certain days, the same women they call upon, on certain other days. The club, instead of being fixed, is now in one place, now in another. And what do the women do in these reunions? They talk, they discuss the latest ideas in the play

of the moment, a new book, the most recent excitement in politics. We do likewise with one decided difference: we do not trust to a chance conversation; — before broaching a subject we work it up seriously by reading and thinking it over. We state our ideas with as much dignity as though we were on the parliamentary platform. We listen to the opposite side if one is brought forth. We try to arrive at a conclusion — I grant you that our way of doing has less grace, less social ease, than yours. But we make up for this in seriousness."

The difference of which she spoke is fundamental. The women of the old world, in society where Latin culture prevails, know that it is not incumbent on them to govern. . . . They will never be called upon to develop their ideas on humanity, to draw up reforms. They need merely express their feelings on such matters. They take their stand on the ground of conduct, which is their stronghold for judging of the laws. Moreover, in the worldly gatherings, so unlike club meetings, which we

call *visites*, there are almost always men present. Immediately this alters the tone of the conversation. The presence of a single rooster in the farmyard is enough for all the hens' eggs to be fertilised. Such are the immutable laws of nature. Should the rooster not be there the eggs will have the same shape, the same appearance, the same weight, but the hens may set in vain upon them. . . . The life germ is lacking: these ideas . . . pardon me! . . . these eggs will not evolve.

I hasten to say that, in the eyes of the observer who abides most closely by the traditions of Latin-Catholic civilisation, the American women have an excuse which, other things being equal, our women would not have: — man in your country is first of all an industrial chief, everything else is secondary; he is not always father in his household, husband to his wife, citizen of his country. He is master in his office. The American women have looked about them in vain for the man of leisure, of culture, who, in all social groups that have

attained a more advanced evolution, have always occupied themselves with art, charity, political movements, reforms, in a word, with all efforts of a socialistic kind.

If, for example, these women try in the evening to talk with their brothers or their husbands about the things of which their thoughts are full, they have a twofold disappointment: they see that the business man, bound down to one specialty, takes little or no interest in their discussions; or if, either by courtesy, or affection, he attempts to enter into their way of looking at things too soon they recognise he is not equal to it.

Ever since he left college, he has been an excellent machine for producing, but he has had no time for thinking. During years of unselfish effort he has not been able to acquire this great treasure: the ideas of others. In everything he is limited to his own experience, which necessarily covers a narrow range.

He has never touched upon the Platonic domain of "general ideas," wherein men of

other countries complete their education, individuals at the start, citizens at the finish. A general idea. Do they know what it means in the United States? In a country where tradition does not exist? Where the bulk of the population is constantly modified by the addition of full-grown men and women who bring with them various odds and ends of language, culture, religion and civilisation. I have even met university professors, superior in their technical branch of knowledge, who constantly confounded words as radically different as *instruction* and *education*. They looked upon them as synonymous; if they feigned to distinguish them it was without much conviction in order to please me. And to tell the truth why should the word have a very different value when the thing itself does not exist? They are in the very first stages of culture, where each one is satisfied to express the individual ideas he has personally acquired. Time is needed, a longer social life, sacrifices of selfish to general interests, before the word "education" in America can define an unknown

virtue, before the cultivation of general ideas can supplant chance upstarts.

Love of the absolute, the need of an ideal indwelling in every feminine mind, incites American women to claim, as best they can, without delay, the indispensable presence of *General Ideas*. They feel the need, these women, of getting together to exchange their opinions, to strengthen their aspirations by adding them to the aspirations of their companions. From the outset of this movement they found that upon one point at least all were agreed: "Man is an inferior animal, woman is a superior being. How does it happen that all the women on this earth have accepted up to the present time the dominion of so mediocre a tyrant? The American woman is going to emancipate herself and her sex. She will proclaim first the independence, then the royalty of woman. In other words, she will set right what has hitherto been wrong."

This program is evidently fascinating, but it shows once again that the feminine mind is not made to dictate laws for humanity.

The ladies and the young girls who attend the clubs are too insufficiently informed to pronounce very decided conclusions, such as:

"Granted that the American man is the intellectual inferior of the American woman, then man in all countries, and in all ages, has been the inferior of the woman."

The history of all the peoples upon earth shows clearly that in every branch of the intellect man has surpassed woman in mental as well as physical force. It is not simply a result of savage existence, of Greco-heathen culture, of Latin-Catholic discipline; the uncompromising club-women of the U. S. A. need but profit by their two months' vacation to visit the very Protestant, the very Saxon England, cradle of their literary, moral, religious and political training. There, as elsewhere, more than elsewhere, they will see that man is intellectually superior to woman.

And as to the American man, whom they declare divested of his privilege, we would like to know whether it be natural inferiority or an accident of circumstance that has kept

him in a rudimentary state of culture while his wife was perfecting herself.

The club women affirm:

"It is by right of birth that we are superior to our fathers, our brothers, and our husbands." She confuses cause and effect. If, like these fathers, brothers and husbands, the woman had been taken out of school at fifteen, if, while she was confining herself to household duties, these fathers, brothers and husbands had until the age of twenty-four or twenty-five kept on in the universities, then the silence which Saint Paul recommends to women would spread over the deserted clubs; man, in the United States as elsewhere, would have the floor, and soon we would see piling up the treasure of *General Ideas* whose revenue is more precious than gold for a people.

It was from the brain of Jupiter, not the entrails of Juno, that Wisdom sprang armed. If you overturn the conditions of life, you condemn the woman to sterility, and the *Idea* which she brings to light at the expense of a mental break-down will in spite of every-

thing bear the stamp of her incomplete sex.

At the risk of being tabooed, I affirm that in the United States and elsewhere I have found all feminine undertakings to bear the stamp of fragility. They are the productions of that excessive cultivation of the *Ego* which only gives itself expression for the purpose of imposing its ideas upon others. Such an ambition as a mainspring is a drawback that promises barren results. The selfish education which the American Woman receives from childhood up deprives even her altruism from appearing like an outburst of charity. Her initiative in this direction remains one of cold-blooded reason. The suffering of the poor is to her a matter for theoretic discussion, for scientific study, for organised direction. She lacks the tenderness that is vital. The poor are not deceived by it.

In Chicago I accompanied one of these club women on a round in quest of painful facts to fill out a report, as the hunter goes in quest of game.

One poor woman who was being questioned answered in a hostile tone:

"Have you come here to help us, or to find out more things about us first? I guess we 've answered about enough questions!"

In the clubs where culture is the purpose of the reunions, where there is no aim at relieving the poor, nor educating the masses, nor reforming society, the same sterility characterises the proceedings of the women. I was allowed, on the sly, to hide behind a curtain and overhear one of their meetings. They told me I would be amazed at the discipline with which it was conducted.

"Compare a man's meeting with a woman's meeting and tell us afterwards which is superior as regards order, eloquence, courtesy in discussions, in the posing of questions, and the whole observation of parliamentary law."

The superiority is on the side of the women, it goes without saying. But, after all, form is not everything when ideas are at stake. Now the numerous reports of meetings which I had an opportunity to read,

only made more emphatic the conclusions I reached behind the curtain where I was hid on the first occasion. In America, as elsewhere, the outcome of a discussion among women is invariably as follows:

Mrs. X—— approves a certain measure, Mrs. Y—— disapproves it. And there the matter rests. They "love" or they "hate." The attempt is to find out not whether a thing "is" or "shall be," but simply "how they wish it might be." They remain in the domain of sentiment; the domain of pure reason belongs entirely to man.

I do not affirm for the sake of the cause that this passion among club women to make out reports, to bring about reforms, prevents them from bearing children. Their sterility is not simply accidental, like that of the college graduates. It is necessary for their leisure, and consequently it is voluntary. This pernicious example is set for America in general by the very women who propose to reform society and make the laws!

And the example is followed only too

closely. We are no longer in the days when a Malthus took fright at the fecundity of the American women and published in his lists that there were five and a fraction children on the average per family in the United States. Things have changed radically since the eighteenth century. Nowadays the greatest fecundity attained by women in the working classes of St. Louis reaches only a figure of two children (2.1) per marriage, and the prodigality is only to be explained by the large and recent influx of German immigrants. The general rule is one child per family (Boston, 1.7, Michigan, 1.8) Professor George J. Engelman, M.D., from whom I borrow the above figures and the following passage, concludes:

"The fecundity is lower than anywhere recorded unless it be in the French metropolis and among college women, English and American."

It is not a question of having a few children; they prefer to have none at all.

"Too often," says the same author, "the

young wife enters the sacred bonds with the distinct understanding that she desires no offspring, and does so because of the inconvenience it would give her."

The results of this sterility, voluntary or accidental, are made clear by the statistics that are painful to read. In St. Louis 23 per cent, in Boston 23 per cent, in the State of Massachusetts 20 per cent of the women are sterile. The average is about 12 per cent of the American women born of American parents. And if, in spite of so many natural and artificial obstacles placed in opposition to child-bearing by the modern woman, she should find herself with child, she has still further means to which she may resort in order not to become a mother. A Chicago doctor gave me these startling figures: "Sixty per cent of my hospital and private patients are women whose illness results from resistance to nature. Fifty per cent of these women are Americans born of American parents. And the following stupefying confidences have also come to me from several well-known doctors:

"'To be sure,' they say, 'the birth rate is not high in France, fecundity is decreasing in the *bourgeois* families — that is, in the well-to-do class of the people — but you French people, you are fond of children. You have the maternal and paternal instinct highly developed. It is for economic reasons that you are obliged to limit your fecundity. Here, in America, we have not the same excuse. We have never been so prosperous as now. And yet the American woman does not want to have children. It would seem as though she hated them. Intellectual pride, a craze for luxury, have turned her head. We have to turn away from our office women of the world, rich, millionaires, who come to ask a service it is impossible for us to render. They say, "My husband is willing. He sent me to you." And when we reproach them, when we tell them that the crime they are about to commit is punished not only by divine and natural law, but by the laws of man in civilised countries, they answer: "Very well — I need only look in the news-

paper — I can find what I want among the advertisements."'"

Such is the moral ruin to which is condemned any society wherein woman has usurped the place that belongs to man. The ever increasing yearly tide of immigrants deceives the native American, the grandsons or granddaughters of the Elizabethans, the descendants of the valiant Yankees; it keeps them deluded as to the destiny of their race. They need only look at the statistics of the population in a large city like Chicago in order to get an idea of the present situation. How long would it take the 400,000 Germans, the 200,000 Irish, the 90,000 Scandinavians, the 50,000 Poles, the 50,000 Bohemians, the 45,000 English and Scotch who have come to settle on the shores of Lake Michigan during less than half a century, to absorb the 300,000 Americans born of American parents who represent the dawning traditions, the virtues, the moral triumphs of a great people? The American women, born Americans, deceive themselves in thinking that they are work-

ing for a new world, an ideal civilisation. All the great qualities handed down to us from the past are being wiped out mercilessly under the torrent of gold, the burden of feminine pride and feminine selfishness.

Chapter XIV

THE BUSINESS WOMAN

STATE Street, Chicago, at an hour when the business crowd was thickest, interested me tremendously.

The office clerk, taken at Hamburg, Antwerp, London or Havre, always looks the same and is always dressed the same; but here, in the throng who tread the snow into mud under their feet, I distinguished a variety of the human "species" peculiar to America. Does the word "species" express what I mean? This strange animal is known as the "business woman." She is not the offshoot of a new lineage, but a hybrid, sterile, — like the mule.

Antiquity invented the siren, a temptress who had the beautiful bust of a woman and the shining body of a fish. America has invented the "business woman." She, too, with the idea of her physical charms being

brought into play, holds herself so as to show to its best advantage the full lines of her figure, while from her waist down to her feet she is clad in a skirt as straight as a man's trousers; she has heavy boots and the general silhouette of a man.

Every morning, without even leaving my hotel, I have a chance to talk with the business women of this type, and first of all with the stenographer.

For about a week I have employed her good services. We are now very confidential. I profit during the moments when there is a lull in customers to make her talk.

"Do you like your work?"

With a slight pout she suggests that the ideal would be to do nothing, to enjoy life as a millionaire on Fifth Avenue. She does not, however, wish to give me the impression that she is a young lady without resources. She says:

"I don't have to work. Two of my sisters do nothing. . . . They stay at home. My father did n't want me to come away. I asked him if he could give me the silks

and velvets and furs and feathers and jewelry I like. He did n't give me any answer, so I started out as a typewriter."

"You make a very good living?"

"Do I look a woman who deprives herself of anything?"

Behind her a gorgeous hat with plumes is hung on a peg; there is an astrakhan coat beside it. On her fingers and in her ears she has diamonds. Her silk bodice is loud but handsome. She is perfumed, too much perfumed. Her hair has just been waved by a hairdresser. The expression on her face, somewhat faded under a layer of powder, is sweet and winning.

"A girl as pretty as you are does n't stay long at her machine. Next year, when I come back to Chicago, you will be married."

She shakes her blond head:

"That 's not very likely, as I don't care to marry."

"You have taken the vows of celibacy?"

"Like any woman, I could marry a man I loved, if he would agree to give me as much comfort and elegance in my home as I can

make for myself working. But what would be the use of marrying a man who'd try to make me over, independent as I am, into a housekeeper, and most likely a nurse?"

On the opposite side of the hotel hall there is another business woman. This one is in charge of the telephone. She also wears a silk waist, a gold chain around her neck; she also bends above her slender waist the rounded lines of a well-filled corsage; but a few silver threads show in her hair; she is nearer twenty-eight than eighteen. I ask her the same questions as her companion, the stenographer.

She responds with straightforward frankness:

"I 'm beginning to get tired of answering all these bells. It upsets your whole nervous system. I only left my home in the country and came to work here so as I 'd have a chance to marry. There are lots of the customers who spend a day or two at the hotel every month on business. Several of the gentlemen are very attentive to me. I like them real well. Some of these days

one of them will ask me to marry him and I 'll accept, I guess."

There is a third category of business women with whom I came rather often into contact. They are divided into two distinct classes: the antique riffraff, splashed with mud from head to foot, on bad terms with soap and water, a brush and a comb. They look like old pieces of timber that have floated up to the surface of the water after shipwreck. They are a kind of Harpy. They have claws, these monsters, to harpoon you in the doorways; they clutch you by the lapel of your coat as you leave your lecture desk. They don't understand a word of French, but they propose to write a *résumé* of what you have just said. They expect you to furnish this *résumé* for them in English. Everything you tell them they get wrong.

The other class of women reporters is decidedly more pleasing to the eye, but an encounter is even more dangerous with this type: the Siren.

I shall never forget my astonishment a

few days after landing in New York, when I was told that one of these beautiful young ladies would like to "interview me." I was living with a bachelor friend who has a business position of great importance.

He said to me:

"Don't go down alone; take my secretary with you."

"Why?"

"It is a precautionary measure I ask you to observe. There must of course be many worthy young women in the list of reporters. They earn their living at a trying kind of profession. But there are too many in the lot who are unscrupulous; they count on blackmail to bring them in a dowry. And you know the American law is a war engine manipulated by the woman against the man! You may be as innocent as a new-born lamb, it makes no difference. They take the woman's word. If you are accused, you are condemned, if not by the courts, at least by public opinion. For example:—In France it is the custom at commencement day, when the prizes are given out, to kiss the young

girls who have received the crown of laurels for good behaviour. If the young woman who is waiting for you downstairs should accuse you, however falsely, of having wished to end your interview by a similar mark of innocent kindliness, there is only one thing I would advise you to do: take the steamer back to France *instanter*. If the blackmail were not against you, it would be against me as your host."

I was so astonished that I asked a French diplomat who is very well up in American customs, if they were not making game of me.

He responded:

"Your friend is over-cautious, but, all told, my experience has proved such caution to be prudent. Equality between man and woman on any ground under the sun is a farce. One or the other is always sacrificed. In the old world it is the woman who is protected against the man; here it is the man who has to be protected against the woman. The American man is beginning to see that he has been imposed upon, and some day or other he will shake loose of the yoke."

This remark roused my attention, and I noticed in what went on around me that it is absurdly true.

The other day, in a Western town, I was waiting in a line at the General Post Office to get my letters. It was just the hour when the factories were out. Men and women, work hands, had come in for the same object as I. I observed that the men gave up their places without a murmur, — they let the women all pass before them, — and the women took the places that did n't belong to them, as though it were the most natural privilege.

With us there are several compartments reserved on every train for smoking, and only one for *dames seules*. In the West a small corner in every railroad station is reserved for the men, so that the women can't invade everything and oust the men, no matter what the weather be outside.

At the entrance of certain factories they are obliged to have two doors where the hands apply for work, one for the men, one for the women, as otherwise the men would

stand aside indefinitely to let the women pass, and their turn would never come.

I saw the same rivalry result in the same conflict in Norway — since equality between the sexes has been decreed there.

The young man and the young girl seeking employment meet every day at the door of any office where they know there is a place vacant.

The girl says:

"I am a woman — I have a right to go in first."

The man answers:

"Excuse me! That used to work very well when it was an understood thing that you were the weak and we the strong sex. In those days, unless I wanted to pass for a brute, I was in honour bound to protect you. It is you yourself who proclaim that you are my equal. If you demand equality plus gallantry, you are going to pretend to a privilege which we, the men, used to enjoy. Come! No politeness between equals: equality will do in a competition."

Thereupon the man and woman both pre-

cipitate themselves toward the office. But the man wishes to go in first to get his place; he gives his equal a knock with his elbow, and as he is the stronger of the two, the woman, in spite of the new law, is kept out, while he gets in.

This story, taken as a symbol or as a fact, amounts to the same thing in the end. The woman begins to exercise her privilege from the moment she admits her weakness. As soon as she demands equality, Nature makes her the victim of force.

I noticed that in America as elsewhere, the privilege of the woman depends almost entirely upon the gallantry of the man. That is to say, not upon any intellectual superiority she has been able to acquire through higher education, but upon physical charm. It matters not that this observation be humiliating for the woman. There is nothing so humiliating as untruth, and hypocrisy is the sin which revolted Christ above all others.

If physical charm is not a trump card for the woman when she is pitted against man,

why, if you please, do the business women dress themselves up so irresistibly — why do they try to emphasise their femininity? Why is it a rule that the typewriters, the telephone girls, shall be young and pretty? Why is beauty an advantage in getting a situation, as it elsewhere is an advantage in provoking gallantry? The answer is this: *The business women don't address themselves to other women, they address themselves to man.*

I recently met a young person of the third sex who is as distinguished as she is intelligent. She is well born. She was carefully brought up, but the death of her father, who did not leave anything, forced her to earn her own living. For six years she has been secretary to a well-known lawyer. She has studied law with him — she knows his methods by heart. Her employer often refers to her, as her memory is good. Yet this is what she told me:

"Often when Mr. X—— is away I receive his clients, men and women both. I sometimes offer to give the information required. The men often accept. The

women always refuse. It's Mr. X—— they want to see. As soon as there's any serious question involved, women have no confidence in other women."

Thus, whether she will or no, the business woman is cast back by the women upon the man. If she wants to succeed she must have charm. She has become imbued with this idea herself; certain business men think too much so; they find it a drawback to mix up gallantry and business. I will mention only one young girl, obliged to seek a place as secretary, who recently wrote to the Society for the Protection of Young Girls a letter which created a scandal. She said she had refused more than one place that had been offered to her, because she felt that she would be unsafe alone with her employer, once the doors were shut behind them. I quote this from hearsay, as I have not the document in my possession.

But here is a very decided opinion which I heard expressed *viva voce* by a New York stockbroker:

"The presence of a young girl or young

woman in an office is never treated with indifference. She is considered attractive or unattractive; she is in every case a disturbing element. If she is attractive the young clerks waste their time conversing with her. She is an object of petty rivalry. If she is unattractive she indirectly delays the work. Man has a feeling of secret enmity toward the woman who is an economic competitor and who does not justify her presence by charm of some sort. In other words, the woman who holds a man's position works less rapidly than he, she gets tired sooner, she does not sustain so regular an effort. For these and other reasons there is a movement on foot in Wall Street against the female employee. A few years ago ninety per cent of the typewriters were women. There is a decided tendency toward doing away with them. The movement is getting more marked. Business and love must not be confounded."

No further conclusion need be added to these pages. The old-world society dis-

likes to see women leave their homes and live in daily contact with men who are neither their fathers nor their brothers; their reason for it is this, which they have learned by experience: powerful or suppressed, disguised or flaunted, physical attraction hovers for ever between the man and the woman. In spite of the climate, in spite of the indifference which peculiar conditions have engendered between the sexes, this is true in the United States. It matters little that the front door of the saloon be closed on Sunday, if there be a back door ajar to welcome the tipplers.

Chapter XV

THE DISCONTENT OF THE MEN

ONE important element in the fascination which man has always exercised over woman is the woman's love of physical force. She responds through it to a natural instinct which is of benefit both to the individual and to the race: the female in all animal species feels that the protection of a robust male increases her chances to live. And moreover it is the law of animal nature that the race shall be perpetuated by its strongest members.

In this respect the American women are in absolute harmony with their sisters, past and present, throughout the universe. May I add that in the far West, where the conditions of life are still primitive, physical force has kept a prestige it of course loses in a society where it finds little outlet?

In a Kansas newspaper I read the following characteristic announcement!

"There was a fight yesterday at M—— between two farm hands, William P——, an Irishman, and Hermann G——, of German descent. The circumstances were rather interesting.

"Both of these men were paying court to the farmer's daughter, Anna R——. The young girl had no preference for either. She announced on several occasions that she would marry the bravest of the two suitors. To settle the matter, William P—— and Hermann G—— decided to fight with pistols at ten feet distance. In the first round Hermann G—— was struck in the hip and fell to the ground. Anna R—— was present at the fight. She fled with William P——. Nothing further has been heard of them."

These are exactly the same natural methods I saw put into practice by the oryx antelopes in the thickets of Somaliland. There I once watched a fight between two males; we could see them from the rocks

above, where we waited on horseback. They came within three hundred feet of us, fighting furiously with their horns. Evidently quite calm, the female witnessed this struggle for the survival of the fittest. Once over, she followed meekly the master Nature had given her, while the vanquished, wounded and bleeding, went to hide himself and his shame, or his agony, in an inextricable jungle.

The life in New England is certainly less simple than in Kansas or in the jungles of Somaliland, but the vast quantity of sofa pillows which I saw in the windows of the young athletes[1] at Harvard and the other universities proved to me that the American girls of the twentieth century are as well disposed toward the conquering heroes of the Stadium as were the sisters of Athens and Lacedemonia. They may perhaps have made a try at the sports where men excel, base-ball, foot-ball or rather basket-ball. But the Mississippi will have rolled many a flood between its banks before they at-

[1] See above.

tempt a match against a team of men. Far from exasperating them, this superior force in the masculine animal attracts them.

This instinctive love which the woman shows for the man's greater physical strength has become, in all civilised countries, an admiration for man's intellectual superiority. Women realise that intellectual and moral force is worth more than physical strength in a civilised world where efforts of mere brute force are made either by machinery or by human beings of inferior mind. And their selection has been modified accordingly. Now, above everything else, they begin to value, in the man who is to be their life companion, the vigour of his intelligence.

The American women have not had a chance to rise above the first stages in the natural worship of force. The man of their country has not, in these later days, been able to conquer them by the superior development of his mind, as in the early colonial times he ruled them by the natural and acquired superiority of his muscular strength.

On the contrary, the tables are turned. At the moment when physical force was depreciating and the value of intellectual force increasing, by an exchange in the rôles of man and woman never seen before, the intellectual superiority began to manifest itself in the weaker sex.

Wherever fate gives the weak a chance to rule, they take unfair advantage. The American women have made tyrannical use of the power placed in their hands by an accident of circumstance. Their ambitions, their fantasies, their egoism, they have made a law. They have reduced man to just where they want him.

As it was necessary to disabuse him of any rebellious ideas, they have had him taught as a small boy by women, and trained him to respect the feminine ideal. It is the same theory as that applied in the doctrine of equality between the sexes. The woman has a right to exact from the man who asks her to marry him, the physical chastity she brings him, etc. etc. As a matter of fact, it is not equality which has

been the American man's religion: he has been forced to believe in the superiority of woman such as he saw her in school and later in his own home. The woman is the "Queen" for him, he is only Prince Consort, when he is not a slave, condemned by the modern Cleopatra to perish under the grindstone.

Take, for example, my friend M——. He leads the life of a typical business man with whom the big cities are overflowing. He starts out for his office very early in the morning. The doctor has advised walking for him, but M—— cannot follow his advice.

"You see," he explained to me, "married, as I am, I am no longer poor enough and not yet rich enough to go on foot. Walking does very well for bachelors, for tramps, and for Mr. Carnegie."

As soon as M—— reaches the office he is in the third circle of Inferno. In the midst of stenographers, typewriters, visitors, telephone messages, his mind is drawn and quartered. For hours and hours he sits

there, judging, combining, deciding, commanding. He has no time to go out for lunch. They bring him a sandwich at his desk. He continues, making his brain and his stomach both work at once; in other words, upsetting two mainsprings of his existence.

If he feels that he can take the time to lunch out, he does not return home as he would in France, for the pleasure of eating with his wife and children, and truly relishing the tempting food which is wholesome for the digestion and sure to prolong his intellectual vigour. He goes to some restaurant with other business men like himself. For *entrée*, *relevée*, roast, and dessert he will have business conversation. Business will be served to him with mayonnaise and with mushrooms, business with fruit, business with coffee, and with liqueurs. When he gets back to his office he will talk business; at his club up to six o'clock he will be plunged in a hot-bed of business. When he leaves it he is exhausted, his back is broken, his head vapid.

He has just time to go home, and get dressed before dinner. Either his wife has invited guests or they are both dining out with friends. This is his favourite diversion, for, at dinner, either in his own house or out of it, he meets other business men, with whom he can continue his conversation on business.

The other day, it was Saturday, M—— came home to lunch in my honour. There were only we two men and five or six women, friends of Mrs. M——, all very *mondaines*. They had been across the ocean dozens of times, visited Rome and Paris and London. The conversation turned naturally upon the pleasures of cosmopolitan life. M—— was silent. Such things were not in his line. However, *à propos* of some comparison between London and New York society, he got in a word. Immediately the two brilliant conversationalists who had the floor, stopped short. The remark, and a very reasonable one it was, made by my poor friend M——, was greeted with a chilly silence. His wife glanced at him with an

expression of astonishment and severity. Such a glance as a French mother casts upon her children when they interrupt the big people's conversation.

Evidently this unexpected intervention of the man who thought because he was paying for the lunch that he had a right to speak, cast a gloom over things. He upset us all, this kind Mr. M——, by his sudden divergence from the usual custom. He realised it. I think he was a little ashamed of it, for until the meal was over he did n't speak again.

If by chance he does not dine out, if no one comes to the house, and he takes his dinner *tête-à-tête* with his wife, M—— is no more expansive.

"When I was first married," he said to me the other day, "my wife and I liked to spend the evening sitting together. I don't know how it is that such an innocent pleasure should have become so perverted that now it is a painful bore for both of us. It is not her fault nor mine. It is the different way we have been educated that is alone responsible for the misunderstanding.

"The desire to procure, for his wife first, and then for his children, luxury, comfort, amusement, is the mainspring of activity in the American man. The material welfare of his family is more than a delight to him; it is a point of honour. So he works from morning till night without rest, without holiday, until he is stricken with heart failure, old before his time, behind his office desk. In exchange for this stupendous effort it would be sweet to find gratitude in his home, little attentions, the sort of spoiling to which a man is as sensitive as a child. For though outwardly life has changed, the principles remain the same: in the primitive days man returned to his cavern weary and blood-stained after his struggle with the wild animals, and with other men as savage as he. It was at the risk of his life that he had hunted down the venison which was to feed his family. To-day, instead of going to battle against lances and claws, he goes to battle with business, no less fierce, no less savage. He returns quite as exhausted, often as severely wounded. He needs to be

soothed and comforted — instead of such peace, what does he find at home?"

My friend M—— looked straight before him with an expression of sadness.

I felt that the ideas to which he was giving vent had been slowly accumulating in his mind. It was a relief to express them for the first time.

He continued:

"At home you find a young wife who loves you undoubtedly, since she consented to marry you; but she does n't seem to suspect for a moment that you have come home exhausted. She has got up at whatever hour pleased her, she has spent her day doing exactly what she chose, with her mind perfectly free. She has been present at the discussion in some club-meeting. She has read some book that is being talked about, a magazine article which expounds some interesting problem of social or political science. She begins to talk animatedly about what absorbs her. She questions you — you respond half heartily because you are worn out, because your mind is turned in an

altogether different direction. Your weariness, which ought to touch her, hurts her feelings — she pouts — she gets nervous — she is evidently saying to herself: 'Have I made a mistake in this man? Have I married a dunce?' She thinks you are not polite enough. She would like you to make more fuss over her. If at that moment the man had courage to explain, perhaps all would be right. He ought to say to her: 'Dearest, do not accuse me of being heavy, indifferent. The very fatigue I bring is a proof of my love. It is the ransom of the effort I have made for you to-day, which I shall make again to-morrow. I don't know how to put my tenderness into words. Judge of it by my acts.' Yes, this is what he should say to her. But the American man is seized with a strange modesty when it comes to expressing his feelings in words, especially before a woman, even before his own wife. So he says nothing. He opens a newspaper. He pretends to read it while he smokes a cigar. He sees with sorrow that this silent resignation ex-

asperates his wife instead of calming her. His timidity only increases. After a while he dreads returning home. He retires to his smoking-room, first sadly, then with the satisfaction of a hunted animal that finds shelter. This morning you looked puzzled when the president of the club stopped at the entrance and said with a burst of triumph: 'You see this club, don't you — well, no living woman has ever stepped across the threshold!' The feeling of satisfaction which our president expressed so naïvely is shared by many less expansive than he. The American husband ends by fleeing his own home. It is in the club that he has his comforts, his habits, his friends. He no sooner enters than he finds his ease and his good-nature hung on the hat-rack at the door."

Chapter XVI

THE ART OF PLEASING

I TOOK care to remind my friend M—— that the fate of the American man is common to all financiers, and has been ever since the comedy of life put upon its stage the woman, the business man, and the young hero. Never in any country, has the business man been loved by women. I beg you to note closely . . . I say *loved*, not "cajoled." Since the days of Aristophanes down to the present playwrights of the Palais Royal, all those who depict life show us the *courtisane* and the "practical" young girl in pursuit of the man who is "making money." . . . But the same dramatists also give us the reverse of the comedy; they have sufficiently demonstrated that it is the money and not the financier which is the attraction — Manon wants pretty dresses, pleasure, amusements, money to

fool away: the poor Chevalier Desgrieux is the man whom she adores.

A rule of the eighteenth century was this; "A gentleman may receive money only from the King and from his mistress."

In those days it never occurred to a gallant man to make money by doing any sort of work or business, — money was less considered than birth, courage and wit. Of two lovers the one who had the most gave to the other. Outwardly this has all been changed by our *bourgeois* society, but the sentiments remain the same. To-day, as long ago, the business man is full of his own business cares; when he sees a woman he is *distrait*, sometimes even brutal, awkward at least. He always seems to be saying: "After all, I am only claiming what is due to me. Husband or protector, I pay dearly enough for my rights to make use of them when I have time or the will — " Whether these words be spoken or hinted at, they could not disgust the feminine nature more thoroughly, — the wife or the *courtisane*, whose inward feelings are the

same on such an occasion. The methods are identical for winning their good grace, for obtaining from them, not a material gift which has no price, but the inestimable acquiescence that comes from the heart.

These honest methods of seduction have not changed since the world began. The most honourable woman suffers that you should think her conquered once for all. She realises that her plighted faith may not be taken back, but love itself is like the sea, like life, in perpetual movement. It increases or decreases. It demands an ever-present understanding between two souls, the daily exchange of ideas and expression of sentiments. Love goes irresistibly toward the man who possesses this science, which, as a matter of fact, is the science of woman, the science of happiness.

Now this science — where could the American man acquire it? At school? In the co-education of the sexes?

Some time ago I was sent by the Minister of Public Instruction on a mission to the north of Europe, to study the effects of co-

education. I questioned the Norwegian teachers with amazement:

"But," I asked, "is there no sentimental drawback in placing these boys of fourteen or fifteen in contact with girls of the same age? In France they would be attracted to one another, and this attraction would become too absorbing for their minds just at a moment when the mind cannot be too free to study."

This was the answer:

"It is not the development of any tenderness that we fear between our boys and girls, but a feeling diametrically opposite, and which we certainly did not expect to see arising between them, — the feeling of indifference, of hatred even."

I could not conceal my surprise, but it gave way before his logical explanation:

"The success of the girls in Norway, in the United States, in France, everywhere, during the first years of school, soon creates between the two sexes a sort of rivalry founded on pride. And world-wide experience, better than theology even, teaches us

that pride is the greatest enemy love has. When, later, this intellectual rivalry begins to add an economic complication, the hostility, dormant up to then, declares itself: it takes another name."

I don't mean to say that such a state of affairs exists in the United States, but it is the sentimental disaster toward which the Americans are advancing. On Sunday, in the cities where the fourth commandment is not too rigorously observed, one sees a striking spectacle: from the top to the bottom of the social ladder, the women go to walk with women, the men go to walk with men. The couple, the male and female, which in all countries of the world and even in antelope herds is the rule of life, appears here as an exception only.

Is it the man who is escaping from the woman? It is the woman who has driven the man away. The American woman has at present to deal with a man whom she has trained herself; she has imposed her will upon him; he is just what she wanted him to be, and he no longer satisfies her! She

wants another; unconsciously she is seeking another. Not long ago I was talking with an elderly lawyer about the comedies and tragedies of divorce.

He said to me:

"For almost twenty years now I have been practising law. I have seen many contradictory things, but I think I can affirm that what I am about to tell you is a fixed rule: when a woman who has nothing to reproach her husband with wishes a divorce, obtains it, and marries again immediately, five times out of ten it is a good-for-nothing she chooses for her second husband."

"You mean unscrupulous women?"

"Not at all. The Romantic woman! The education which our boys receive at school, side by side with their sisters, takes the freshness from any physical attraction they may have for each other. The man is familiar with the woman, and yet he knows nothing about her. The woman has no curiosity about this simple creature, her companion, whom she already knows too

well. On the other hand, over the good-for-nothing hovers a mystery which has charm. As a mere boy he escaped from the influences of the women in his family. He started forth alone in search of adventure. He had leisure to cultivate his tastes. The women to whose houses he went had a refining influence over him. He understands woman. He knows when he should give in to her, when she wishes to be resisted, when she wishes to be mastered."

I had already been somewhat astonished to notice the enthusiasm which the young girls here show for actors. They buy their photographs, they exhibit them on their mantel-pieces, they go faithfully to the matinées when they can see and hear their favourites. Such a preference would be looked upon askance in French society, where the young woman who wishes to come in contact with the masculine mind, and thereby modify her own ways of thinking, meets in the salons of those she visits men of the world only too happy to lay themselves out for her in wit and wisdom.

The American girl finds nothing equivalent in her surroundings; she is obliged to go to the theatre to see and hear a man who seems convinced that love is the great affair, and who knows how to murmur words of tenderness in the ears of the young heroine.

This desire to meet somewhere a man who thinks about something beside business, who cultivates himself, not for professional reasons, but because he wants to be more refined, this desire is so keen in the American woman that, charmed though she may be by athletics, one often sees her falling in love with the young invalid, the consumptive with lustrous eyes, who will be gone before the year is out. It can't be said in this case that she is carried away by her senses.

She is attracted merely by a refinement she has sought elsewhere in vain. Once again she is charmed by the mystery that surrounds an education apart from the every-day common-places. These qualities are so rare, so eagerly sought for by the woman, that through an anomaly full of meaning we

see the fortune of love turning in favour of those whom the laws of selection are exterminating.

In attributing this sentimental aberration to the moral refinement of the American woman, I cannot help reflecting that if I were an American business man, a good husband like M——, all these secret yearnings toward the good-for-nothings, the actors, and the invalid heroes would put me in a bad temper.

M—— hears my reflection and declares:

"But I *am* in a bad temper, my dear fellow! And a lot of other husbands along with me! I hear them say every day at the club: 'There is no question about it, our wives are unreasonable, and they cost too fearfully dear!'

"We granted the woman a privilege in a virgin land where her presence represented to the pioneer all his chances of happiness and success. This privilege has no corresponding place in the modern civilised life. But it is precisely at this moment that the woman, aristocrat that she is, chooses to

abuse our long-suffering forbearance. Her reign is nearing its end! Not long ago some orator at the close of a meeting proposed this toast:

"Women — once our superiors — now our equals."

"Every day the men are growing more indifferent to all that is not their office or their business. They used to love business for the chance it gave them of making their wives happy. *Now they are beginning to love business for its own sake, like gambling or drinking, or as other nations have adored their courtisanes.*"

Upon which prophecy we set out to finish our evening at the theatre. We went to see a popular play, where the capital May Irwin brought down the house as the "Widow Jones" who first buries three husbands, and then spends her leisure time in writing a treaty on "The uselessness of man," a subject dear to the third sex.

It seemed to me that in the bursts of laughter I could hear preliminary murmurs of the sentimental rebellion which may well

bring down the American woman from the pedestal where man's over-indulgence has imprudently placed her.

When the French woman, upon whom, by a contrary extreme, the *loi de l'homme* weighs rather heavily, escapes from the tyranny of a conjugal jailor, in a vaudeville which makes the husband ridiculous, the audience laughs — they approve. They are enchanted to see that custom regulates any abuse of the law.

In the United States it is the husband who is the victim of his better half. He willingly takes advantage of his wife's absence, and the fact that he has drunk a little more than usual, to draw the public, present at the comedy, into his confidence regarding the trials inflicted upon him at home. There is no subject surer to provoke a general laugh. If it happens that the husband, supported by the approval of the gallery, continues to rebel, to "kick," so that after having been a victim, he ends by putting the woman in her proper place, there is a general explosion of joy, the public con-

science is relieved, — and the wives laugh as heartily as their husbands.

M—— and I watched the amusement of the audience.

"Do you know," I asked him, "what they remind me of, these pretty women, so arrogant in their own homes, when they applaud the emancipation of man so heartily? It seems to me, given the different setting, that we are present at a first representation of the Noces de Figaro. In the declining glory of Royalty we hear the nobles cheering the revolutionary Idea which was going to guillotine their rights."

Chapter XVII

THE RESTLESS WOMAN

IF an order of society which brought about the discontent of man ended at least in unadulterated happiness for the woman, one might hesitate to criticise it, saying to oneself:

"In this world where nothing is ideal, it is something to have half of humanity content."

But this is not the case. A great number of American men have begun to grumble, and a still greater number of American women are "restless." The "restless woman" is almost as marked a type as the "business woman" in the United States.

I have hunted in vain for a synonym to translate the word "restless" into French — I can't find any that is as eloquent and

as expressive. The French language is rich enough, but the restless woman has n't yet made her appearance in our midst. I don't count the lovely cosmopolitan who adopts Paris as her favourite abode; I mean simply the women of French birth and tradition, brought up in the Catholic Church. I explain their health and peace of mind by their education. The curse of "restlessness" is more moral than physical.

The French girl when she is young does n't bother in the least about the future. She is thoroughly feminine; she is certain to marry; she is confident that at the proper time she will be picked out by a man she likes. The future husband may be long in arriving, he may not arrive at all, but just the same in the eyes of the girl he has been a fixed and coveted end. Long after she has lost any charm she might have exerted, she will continue to cherish the thought of marriage with the revival of youth that one reads about in fairy stories. When the hour has passed and taken with it for ever her chances, it is still marriage that she con-

templates, bitterly now, denouncing what she has not been able to realise.

This end, seen in perspective, makes the way easier, it is approached joyfully, it serves as a rallying-point for stragglers; but the American girl does not look upon it as the necessary end toward which she is making her way. She walks freely before her in whichever direction she chooses, she stops whenever she likes, she leaves one path to follow another, she even retraces her steps. I am convinced that this whimsical changeability is one of the chief causes of the disease, half moral, half physical, known as "restlessness." Like the phylloxera it eats into the fine American roots.

My observations have not always been confined to the drawing-room. Not long ago I was making my way, compass in hand, across the lonely stretches of Central Africa, at the head of a troop of black men. As we were travelling in an unexplored country my duty was to go ahead of my men through forest and jungle, to scale the mountains and plan the next day's march, in order to save

useless fatigue and wandering. When I had discovered the exact spot of the passes and the fords, I could demand a superb effort from my soldiers. *They knew where they were going.* They knew that when they had crossed a certain mountain they would find water, fodder for the animals, a place to pitch the tents. Sustained by this definite end in view, they marched from dawn to sunset without a murmur.

If, by chance, I had made a mistake in my calculations, if, suddenly, we found ourselves before a bottomless river, or a swamp we could not cross, if we had to retrace our steps, all was changed — not only the men, but the mules and the horses seemed to be suddenly exhausted. The men were nervous at the end of a few hours; the animals were covered with foam. Once when we lost our way entirely and were groping about for a time in the virgin forest, I was obliged to quell a beginning of mutiny among my men.

You see the point I wish to make: the misfortune of the American girl is that her

mother and father, from the time she has attained the age of reason, dare not point out firmly to her this divine and human end, marriage, toward which, however, they hope that she will direct her steps. As to the ardour of this hope I make no mistake — I questioned many an old couple, contemporaries of my father and my grandfather, as to the future they had dreamed of for their daughters.

"Did you urge them," I asked, "to traverse life quite alone, to scorn the aid and affection of man, to be old maids?"

They protested as though my question rather hurt them. "Where," they answered, "are the fathers and the mothers who would deliberately bring up their daughters to be old maids? When we see that the time is going by and that our daughter does not decide to make a wise marriage, it saddens us, you may be sure, as much as it does your parents in France."

I could not very well tell them that it is not enough to be saddened; that they should take action in advance. Yet these kindly

parents have a great responsibility to shoulder in the "restlessness" of their daughter. If they had watched more carefully over the lessons she took when she was a child, they would have realised that there is a direct contradiction between the way an American girl is "brought up" and the way she is "educated."

Avowedly or not, she is "brought up" to be married. The father and mother who spoil her so, who spare her every annoyance, who satisfy her every whim, who give her a life of liberty and luxury without responsibility, these parents never intervene to correct the ignorance of youth by the wisdom of experience; they evidently think that some day the man who falls in love with their daughter will succeed them in the difficult task of making a spoiled child happy.

The education which the girl receives, on the other hand, at school or at college, if she continues her studies, does not in any way prepare her for the rôle of wife and mother. She is pushed ahead in her studies as though

she were to support herself in the future by the exercise of some profession. . . . Thereafter, whatever be her destiny, she is condemned to suffer. If she puts off marrying, then the hours when she is not amusing herself cause her the keenest torment. The unproductiveness of her mind troubles her. All the forces of her intelligence and of her feelings, which should be given an outlet in life, are lost in a chimera. She persists in waiting for true love. She compares to the ideal she has built up of manly perfection the men she sees about her in flesh and blood; she becomes engaged; she is enthusiastic; the next day she has broken her engagement, she is bitter; and the final outcome is the melancholy collapse of soul and body known as "nervous prostration."

When she has reached this stage, of moral and physical perversion, she seldom retraces her steps, she seldom recognises her error and consents to marry, out of reason, one of the men she has refused. And even supposing she would like to recall a rejected suitor, it is not sure that he would return at

the first word. The graceful roundness of youth has given way to a sickly thinness, the animation of the spoiled child is replaced by a critical sense, sour and cutting. The physical charm is gone. She must turn aside from Love's highway. So the "restless" girl decides to follow the other highway, of intellectual production. It is in vain that she tries, in her hatred of man, to divest herself of the feminine charm that remains; she continues to suffer. She tries to get away from herself, she is possessed with the desire to travel, to keep moving. One meets her in Switzerland, on the mountains; she wears a man's hat and coat, she has no corset, she carries an alpinestock in her hand. She wants to be taken for an emancipated woman; but if she deceives others, she does not deceive herself. At the bend of a road where she thinks no one can see her she stoops down, what for? To pick a flower, a forget-me-not, which she folds between the leaves of her Baedeker, to keep as a souvenir.

Now let us suppose that this spoiled child has made up her mind in time; that

in a moment of distraction she has pronounced the long waited for "yes," — and that we have her married. Her happiness scarcely outlasts her honeymoon; the total absence of discipline in her life is not only a misfortune for her household, but the enemy of her own well-being. The duties as wife, as housekeeper, as mother, which she has refused to recognise, nevertheless exist. If she had paid attention to them they would have been food for the brain and the heart, — having neglected them they avenge themselves. The husband is silent and grumpy; the children are indifferent or sickly; the servants slight their work so that the house, when one has to stay home, is unbearable. The outside occupations which one has assumed have n't the genuine character of regular duties. The ambition of the woman is thwarted by the ambition of other women. Outwardly and inwardly it is the struggle, the clashing of one vanity against another, of one egoist against other egoists.

If the woman had been brought up to the idea of duty, she could recover herself,

She would realise that one is condemned to live in everlasting uneasiness when one has no other object on earth but oneself. She prefers laying the blame on others for her disillusion, and, first of all, on the nearest neighbour, her husband. It seems to her if she could only have back her liberty, or change her husband for another, that she would find a remedy for the ill from which she suffers. So she gets a divorce.

"I mention divorce," says a scientific man whom I have already quoted, "as it is co-related with sterility, and closely connected with the moral causes of childlessness. It has increased in frequency, particularly of late years in Europe, 67 per cent from 1876 to 1886, and in the United States 72.5 per cent. For the United States the Census of 1890 shows 540 divorces to 100,000 married couples, which is approximated only in Switzerland by 195, in France 80, in Germany 77, Russia 11, England 8, and Canada 1.6 to 100,000 marriages. In Rhode Island for 1898 it is one in every 8.2 marriages, which would be 12,500 divorces to the

100,000 married couples; and for Massachusetts in the same year one to 18. Throughout the State of Ohio there is one divorce to 20 marriages. In counties settled by New England farmers it is respectively one to 7.4, and one to 8.5, whilst in countries settled by Welshmen and Southerners it is only one in 50. I myself have made no investigation in this direction, but present the figures of Dr. Nathan Allen, figures originally collected by Rev. Samuel W. Dike and referred to in the paper of Dr. Allen, in which he shows the deterioration of the New England family. It is apparent how much worse conditions in the United States are than in any European country."[1]

Last year in Chicago there was a private meeting held by the twelve most distinguished gynecologists in America. They diagnosed with patriotic melancholy the symptoms which the egoist, blinded by

1 George J. Engelman, M.D., Boston. The increasing sterility of American women — Reprinted from the Journal of the American Medical Association. (Oct. 5, 1901.)

money and success, refuses to see. They agreed that the effort not to become pregnant, on the one hand, and on the other the unwillingness to bear the child once conceived, made a degenerate of the American-born woman.

They were of one opinion that no progress in therapeutics nor gynecology could check this degeneracy. The patient alone is capable of saving herself, if, in reality, she wishes to get well: the roots of the evil are in the intellectual, moral, social, home education of the woman.

A truth of such severity could hardly be presented by a foreigner, if it were not backed up by a scientific authority before which we bow respectfully. Any sociologist, informed of the way an American girl is brought up, could not but predict, *à priori*, certain of the consequences which this scientific statement brings out. One cannot violate with impunity the laws of creation. Woman is destined by God and by Nature to live for others, as a young girl for her parents, as a married woman for her husband,

as a mother for her children, as a grandmother for her descendants.

The family group is the natural setting for her normal evolution.

The American woman has tried another field.

She has desired to live for herself. We hear that it is killing her.

Chapter XVIII

LES LEÇONS DE L'ÉPREUVE

SEVERAL years ago the German writer, Max Nordau, published a book which in France and out of it was very much talked about. It was called: "Degeneration of the Latin races." It informed us that we are destined inevitably to disappear from the stage of history, to make way for the Germanic and Anglo-Saxon races. This sentence naturally delighted those who are unfriendly to us, and excited in France a lively indignation. We felt that Mr. Nordau had mixed up the rule with the exception; that he had, out of *parti pris*, forgotten our virtues to dwell upon our vices, ignored our strong points to put our failings in a vivid light, directed all his attention to the abnormal. When the first irritation had passed, we thought the matter over. We said to ourselves that even from

the unjust criticisms of an adversary there is more profit to be gained than from the exaggerated flattery of a friend. We are sure that Mr. Nordau mistook what he wanted to be true for the truth; yet just the same we recognised more than one helpful warning in his book. It was not the moment to apply the proverb: "Who loves well, punishes well," but to ponder on the wisdom of the nations; "It is thine enemy who will give thee the best counsel."

I fancy also that the statistics published by the American gynecologists and their pessimistic conclusions are of a nature to enrage many Americans, especially the women who are sensible and charming. It seems to me that I can hear them say:

"Doctors are all alike — they never see anything but sick people, and so they imagine that everybody is sick. And what is worse, they announce it, they put it in print! Foreigners read their pamphlets, it is most discouraging for us, and it places us in an unjust and unfavourable light before outsiders."

However little philosophy there may be in such a protestation, it touches me; it has risen to my own lips a hundred times when my countrymen were in question. It makes me furious to see them severely judged by people who don't know them. I am exasperated to always hear their defects enumerated by ignorant people who have no idea of their virtues. I don't want to make the same blunder in speaking of the United States; I don't want to give the impression that I have not seen all that is fascinating and uncommonly fine about America, when I make a criticism.

There are certain tendencies in the education of the women which I cannot judge calmly. It would be one thing if people were satisfied to simply say to us:

"Such and such are the methods of educating and bringing up women in the United States. . . ." But they propose these methods to us as models. They say:

"These methods are better than yours. They have made the American woman, in her individual development, in her social

and domestic qualities, far superior to your woman of Latin-Catholic training. You continue to form your daughters in a mould which does not educate them for the necessities of modern life. Break this old standard. Make up your minds, can't you, to create emancipated women after the American pattern?"

No one could be better disposed than I, I am convinced. I have travelled too extensively to suppose that there is not much that is new and much that is good to be borrowed from civilisations different to our own. I know also how cautiously one must graft an old tree not to pollute the flavour of its natural fruit under pretext of making it produce something new.

You can be sure of what you already have. You ignore what you may obtain. With the same prudence I judge of the education of the American woman, not from a pre-conceived plan, but from the results acquired. I note more especially all that is characteristically opposed to our methods, and to our customs, — something that has gone beyond

the individual case and become a general tendency.

The importance I give to what is new obliges me to leave aside those aspects of the problem which, for self-evident reasons, appear in the same light on both sides of the ocean. All the world over the parent cherishes his child. People who say, after hearing missionaries talk, that "the Chinese give their children to the pigs to eat . . ." talk nonsense. All the world over children respect their parents; and if you should affirm that in the United States all grandfathers are treated by their grandsons like poor "Foxy Grandpa" you would be trifling. All the world over love is the chief preoccupation of the young man. So if there were an idiot who took literally the remark that "in America men go one way, the women another," this same idiot would have to ask himself "from what miraculous garden then come the enchanting babies one sees rolled about in their perambulators like clusters of roses wrapped up in frills of white paper?"

In the United States there are a great

number of women whose unique occupation is to be devoted daughters, devoted wives, devoted mothers. These women are not the type perhaps of whom the "third sex" feel the proudest, but, thank heaven, they are in the majority. They uphold with their hands the edifice which others would drag to the ground. They act, while the others talk. This is no reason why they should be forgotten, and, after having outlined on this notebook the silhouettes, some tragic, some comic, of the business woman and the restless woman, I could not forgive myself if I did not sketch, at least with a few rough strokes, the portrait of the other American woman, who stands guardian over the qualities, the superiority, and the charm of her ancestors.

About Easter time I received a very pleasant invitation. Some friends of mine, who live during the greater part of the year in one of the big cities, were going down to open their country house for the holidays, and they asked me to go with them.

The family consisted of the father, the mother, a son and three daughters. I knew

the girls were very worldly, used to being waited upon like little princesses. About two days after our arrival there was a sort of royal uprising in the palace. All the servants left at once, cook, kitchen maid, housemaids, laundress. These ladies did n't care for *country* life. They were indignant at being made to leave town sooner than usual without having been consulted. They considered this reason enough to demand reparation, and the reparation was a raise in their wages. They agreed to ask for it all together, and to threaten that they would leave if it were not granted.

"Madame and Mesdemoiselles," they said to themselves with more slyness than consideration, "have guests with them. We are a long way off from the city — there is n't a soul in sight on whom they can call for help. So Madame and Mesdemoiselles will have to give in to us. They are n't going to turn cook and chambermaid!"

This is just where these bad young women made a mistake. With delicious good-humour our hostesses asked us if we would risk

being waited on by them. The cooks and the chambermaids, very much aghast, were asked to pack up their trunks and depart promptly.

I said to myself:

"The new broom sweeps clean — it will be very amusing at first, but my pretty little friends will soon get tired of it."

I was wrong to doubt them. For a whole week the experiment was kept up, and I never once saw any sign of weariness at this unwonted effort. Of course the first attempts in cooking called forth bursts of merriment, but intelligence and determination make anything go. From one meal to the next we noticed astonishing improvements in our *cordon bleus*' knowledge of cooking. By dawn they were up sweeping down the stairs, dusting, putting the house in order from top to bottom. In other words, this country home, rid of the ill-natured domestics, became a paradise.

I have told this story right and left to my various hostesses. They laugh and say:

"The experience you speak of is not as

unusual in this country as it would be in France. There are hardly any American girls or married women who have not been subjected to such surprises by their servants."

Some one told me of a family who spend half the year absolutely alone in the country. During six months the women and the young girls of the household manage entirely by themselves. They are so delighted with the experiment made on their Western property that they have decided to continue it always.

The friend who was telling me this added:

"You see we have qualities of this sort handed down to us by our ancestors, the wives of the first pioneers. Such jewels are no longer the fashion — and not generally worn. But if by chance one comes across them in the bottom of an old drawer, and has a fancy for putting them on, the grandchildren perceive that these old-fashioned things are quite as becoming to them as they were to their grandmothers — "

Beside such accidents which are taken in the nature of an amusement, or at least of

a self-imposed task one adopts by choice, the life of the American woman is full of trials; they give one a chance to judge her under difficulties that are tyrannical and often of long duration.

There is no country in the world where financial ruin is so frequent. Let the head of the household die, and from one day to the next the social condition and the material existence of his family are changed.

There is a sudden drop from luxury to want, or, even worse, to the immediate necessity of earning one's daily bread.

On all sides I have seen women and girls who have been suddenly snatched from their pleasures, from the spoiling of every kind they have enjoyed since infancy and plunged into the cruel struggle for life. They very rarely fail in this trial to show a strength of character which is admirable. Evidently the qualities which come to the surface in a similar moment are an inherited force. There is a touch of Puritan leaven in the black and white bread eaten to-day. Moreover, the young girls who are so apt for the

struggle feel tingling through their veins an energy put there by selection, the selection of the strong and venturesome type. Whatever may be the sources of their extraordinary initiative, the result is undeniable; no one can help admiring it.

Do you want examples? There are enough to compose a treatise on the "principle of energy." It would demonstrate conclusively the justice of an axiom dear to the hearts of philosophers: "Prosperity diminishes, adversity fortifies the soul." I will choose, among the quantities of cases that have been presented to me, a typical example of a woman whom I had the honour of meeting this winter.

About twenty years ago the family of Miss X—— was very prominent in a large city in Ohio where she still lives. The death of the father brought with it complete financial ruin. Nothing was left to the wife, to Miss X—— and her sister, but the life insurance, which was fortunately large. It would not permit the luxury of bygone days, of course, but it was a sure protection. A

business adviser in whom they had confidence took this sum to invest; he absconded, carrying the money with him.

The three women were left penniless with several lawsuits on hand.

Miss X—— announced that she was going to support her mother and her sister, and that she would keep her father's name spotless by paying off every one of his debts. It took her twenty years to accomplish it. She worked with heroic energy. She became a business man and a lawyer herself in order to combat on equal ground with her prosecutors. She succeeded in making happy the last days of a mother whom she adored. When all the debts were paid off she put aside enough so that, once her modest needs satisfied, she can give away a generous share of her earnings in charity. Her love of humanity is not limited to a circle of intimate friends, not to the city, nor the country where she lives. Her tenderness embraces other nations who have an ideal different from that of her compatriots. This universal interest has given her a subtle penetration, an intelli-

gence which understands as by revelation. When one speaks of her to those who know her, there is no question of "sets" or of local rivalry. The most distinguished people of the city consider it an honour to go to her house. The day she received me, she presented me at once to some high dignitary of the Protestant Church, to the most important of the Catholic priests in the city, and to a well-known Rabbi.

I have searched through my memory: I know many young girls in France who after such a disaster have made the happiness of their parents the end and aim of a life of sacrifice. Such filial devotion is frequent with us, certainly more frequent than in the United States. But what I have never met with in the field of my experience is a girl of Latin and Catholic training who, finding herself under such terrible conditions, has saved the situation by such immediate and extraordinary intelligence and character.

The *milieu* which was favourable to Miss X—— would in France under the same circumstances have been hostile to a French

girl. She would not have found, at least in the field of business, the encouragement, the support and the protection, which were offered her American sister. With us, where class distinctions are marked, where breeding and education have much value, the violent ups and downs in a fortune are not looked upon with favour; neither in those who grow suddenly rich — the gold of the parvenu does not open the doors of society to him — nor in those who suddenly lose everything. We seem to agree that one should not expose the people whose houses one frequents, to seeing one suddenly divested of everything. It is impossible to continue going out in society when one has no more money. It is very embarrassing for people to be obliged to stop inviting you because you have ceased to be rich.

In the United States the risks of speculation often make or ruin a man several times in the course of his life. These rapid changes are the most serious obstacles to true refinement of manners, and to the development of good breeding. At least

they have the merit of inculcating public opinion with certain of the gambler's generous qualities. The gambler is quite ready to aid, with a fraternal good fellowship, any man who was on the pinnacle yesterday and who is in the depths to-day.

The American women find this life of speculation a spur to their courage. Several whom I had known in Paris, where they lived most luxuriously, I found in New York — the word is not strong enough — in poverty. They had never seemed to be very devoted to their absent husbands, who paid for their extravagant possessions. But ruin had suddenly changed the aspect of things. I saw them by the conjugal fireside, from which they used always to be absent; I was charmed with their unfailing spirits. They touched me by their exercise of a thousand domestic virtues which prosperity had thwarted in them. I spoke of these impressions to my old friend, a lawyer, who more than once has given me an insight into the inner working of American life which foreigners do not penetrate. He declared:

"When you read in a list of lawsuits the grounds on which American women obtain divorce, you sometimes feel humiliated. The willingness of the court is only to be equalled by the fantasies of the unfaithful beauties. But we must give them due praise for a nobility which redeems many sins; we have never yet heard an American woman say in court:

"'My husband promised to make me happy. He has made unfortunate speculations. He is ruined. We are reduced almost to starvation. He has not kept his promise. I wish to be free.' This is a complaint we have never yet heard. The most coquettish, the most extravagant, make it a point of honour to share, without a murmur, the existence of a husband to whom in the days of prosperity they were only half attached. A host of conjugal virtues blossom out under adversity. To find these virtues so set apart from riches one feels inclined to ask whether the extraordinary commercial prosperity of the United States is not first and foremost responsible for

the frantic egoism and conceit which we see in the women."

The truth of the matter is this. The salutary influence of adversity transfigures from one moment to the next almost every woman it touches. Instead of useless agitation you find valour; hard-heartedness is replaced by tenderness, caprice by resignation, the old contempt of man by a loving appreciation of his courage. And what does it require to bring about the change?

Some circumstance which gives the woman another outlet than the speculative training of the mind, some object other than her own whims, — a sudden turn of fortune's wheel, which overthrows the false rule of egoism and gives place to the spirit of self-sacrifice. From this moment on, the woman is restored to her destiny. This destiny the American woman is able to fulfil with so much charm, so little affectation. What a pity that adversity alone should bring out the brilliant qualities which she possesses naturally!

Chapter XIX

WHERE IS THE EXAMPLE TO COME FROM?

FOR any one who admires the splendid manifestations of humanity known as the United States, it is a great joy to realise that if the Americans wish to modify themselves in any way they can find in their own country a plan of existence adopted to divine and natural laws. In America, where violent contrasts are the rule, side by side with surprisingly mistaken ideas of life, there are certain admirable examples of a perfectly normal existence. They are not only a proof of the vitality of old Yankee tradition, but they are, more generally speaking, an honour to mankind.

Nothing during my visit to the United States left a more profitable impression upon my memory than the refreshing hours spent with my boon companions, the officers at

West Point. In all countries I have always found the society of officers very agreeable, especially on the frontier posts, where they are so evidently the right men in the right place. It is neither in the stall nor the paddock that the thoroughbred reveals himself, it is on the day the race is run.

The young American officers whom I saw at West Point were fresh from the campaign in Cuba and the Philippines. Their ears were humming to the rattling of guns; they had felt the wind stir as the flags unfurled over their heads. This gives somewhat a different air to the man who returns from the battle of money on the Stock Exchange. In the evening the young girls came, each with a cadet, to hear the lecture I was giving on War Tactics in Central Africa. It seemed to me that these pretty young creatures were as impressionable as I to the military bearing and the commanding manners of our amiable hosts. Like true women all the world over, they were susceptible to the prestige of a uniform. Not only because it shows off masculine

strength and beauty, but because it is the outward proof of an existence devoted to an ideal; the mere sight of it calls up a host of romantic ideas. Now, in the regular American life, woman's natural taste for the romantic goes half starved.

There is another reason of a higher order for the charm these young men exert over these young women. Here at last is a type of man emancipated from woman. Even supposing that as little boys at the primary school they received a few lessons from a person of the "third sex," the trace of this monitress, like the memory of her, has vanished from their minds. They are as virile in their way of thinking and feeling, of judging men, women and things, as they are strong and vigorous in their bodies.

They told me that at the games and at full-dress parade there are always quantities of women present. They are proud of being sisters and cousins or friends of these young heroes, who, while the physiognomy of the American people is being constantly modified by the slow infusion of foreign

blood, stand guard over the traditions of the past, over the common hope that is a bond among all the States and the very soul of the Union itself.

On such fête days the West Point cadet, who lets his eyes wander toward the grand-stand, crowded with young girls, is sure to meet other eyes lifted toward his with an expression of gentle submission. The American novels and illustrated books generally picture the man turning timidly toward a haughty woman. Here things have resumed their natural and reasonable proportions. The woman admires the man of force and wishes to be singled out by him.

And yet she knows very well, this American girl, brought up in a circle where luxury rules supreme, where money, not merit, determines her social position, that in marrying one of these officers she shall be obliged to give up all chances of a worldly existence, of the extravagant pleasures which in the eyes of her companions make life worth living. She has no *dot*, and he has only

his pay. It is strictest simplicity she accepts for to-day and to-morrow. In an officer's career there is no hope of a sudden rise of fortune. She knows in advance what his pay will be when he is colonel, or if, through personal merit or the hazards of war, he should even become a general.

What difference does this make to the girl? Her true love convinces her that a woman does not find happiness in public life, but in the being whom she has made her life companion. Her feminine instinct tells her that beauty, physical strength, moral courage, all that gives a man the upper hand, are worth more in marriage than hoards of money.

So without effort she decides to live contrary to the standard of American society, but in accordance with nature.

I visited, when in the garrisons outside of the big cities and on the campaign ground at Cuba, these American officers and their wives. I was charmed to behold lives so healthy, so simple, so happy. It was here that I saw the family life wherein man is

the keystone. He was of course often away from the house, occupied with his soldiers; but the exercise he took out of doors, training horses and recruits, manœuvring across the fields and the forests, sent him back to the hearth more vigorous instead of more exhausted.

He would, of course, be ready, if duty called, to sacrifice his life for his country, but how differently they sounded on our ears, the two sighs of the two American wives:

"My husband is a stockbroker. I know he is killing himself. But I cannot stop him. . . . He is so successful."

And on the other hand the officer's wife who murmured with hands joined, eyes uplifted:

"Duty calls him to the Philippines. . . . He must leave at once. . . . Heaven grant that his life be spared."

A woman cannot love in the same way the man who wears himself out to satisfy her luxury and her vanity and the man who risks his life for an ideal. The officer husband

returns home from drill not with the constrained manner of a man who feels a stranger in his own house, but with the air of a master, kind, just, and dignified, whose duty it is sometimes to obey, sometimes to command.

His wife recognises his prestige. She loves him. She does not seek any other object in life. She is happy to bear children who resemble him. Love, which made her tender as a girl, makes her devoted as a wife.

In the *milieu* where she lives, she finds encouragement for loving her husband and for occupying herself with her children. The young women about her, in the modest posthouses like her own, have no occupation, no desires, no thoughts different from hers. Supposing that a man with means be drawn toward the army, he and his wife make no splurge with her money. It would be unsuitable for a lieutenant to outshine his colonel. Thus, under the shadow of the flag, there has sprung up a marvellous commencement of civilisation, a family where

the man has leisure to be a husband and a father, an embryo society where the family group lives on common traditions, common ideas, and common hopes. It is with such bricks as these that the foundations of society in America will be laid, upon ground still shaken by volcanic upheavals.

There is another centre which for the same reasons will furnish excellent material for the national monument when money has taken its proper place. I refer to the university centres, the professors' families.

We are agreed that women can truly love neither an equal nor an inferior, but a superior only. This superiority has two different aspects: it is either more physical or more intellectual. In the household of the officer, it is the strong and valiant human animal that is chosen, so that the health of the race may profit. In the professor's household what the cultured woman appreciates is a man superior to her by destiny, who wishes her whole feminine nature and all that it is capable of producing to be dominated by the creative power of the masculine mind.

Such a husband has not stopped his studies at the normal school, where he was still obliged to submit to the yoke, the disfigurement of women's teaching. He has lived a long time among men, in a university. He has been to Italy, France, Germany, the centres of Science and Art. He knows what Beauty and Thought are, he gives to Love its proper place. He gives the refinement of woman its due consideration, when he loves. He knows that she sometimes rises, by feeling, to heights that he can only attain by the power of reason. He does not look upon woman as his mathematical half, but as his counter harmony.

The sincerity with which I have expressed myself continually in these pages, the little desire I have had to please, having made clear my genuine admiration for the Americans, gives whatever value they may have to the following praise. In the United States, I saw, among the university centres, married couples whom I envied. I would like to show them as an example to the men and women of my country. On the part of the

man there was a dignified respect for the personality of his wife. On the part of the women a recognition, not blind and passionate, but a wise and well-balanced recognition of her husband's merit. In a country where tradition is still lacking this wife upholds her husband in whatever he attempts with the innate force given to every woman, a force whose power increases tenfold under the fruitful influence, not of pride, but of love.

I have seen the rush and luxury of New York, Chicago, Cincinnati, Philadelphia, San Francisco, the thick of the commercial fight, the prosperity of the manufacturing centres, the exuberance of gold, jewels, silks, satins, velvets, pearls, wine and roses. This formidable display of money did not impress me. I look down upon it as the child of an old race who does not confuse gold with riches, success with power, wealth with education.

I visited with respect the humble homes where I saw, in full force, qualities which, the day America is no longer preoccupied

about becoming rich and richer, will determine her true greatness.

Here I was set to thinking. I asked myself whether our Latin-Catholic instruction was sufficiently just toward the woman; whether we had not kept up too long a distrust in her which is no longer justified. Between the odious over-emancipation of the third sex and the half-dependence, the ignorance of the world, wherein we too often bring up our daughters, I found there was a happy medium of which I met many examples in America.

It is in the pleasant recollection of these very examples that I wish to close my traveller's notebook. I hope that it may be a contribution to the present most intensely interesting study, — the relation between the modern man and the modern woman, in the family, in marriage and in society.

At the foot of the last page ten lines will sum up, for the reader and for me, the impressions that I received concerning the form in which the problem presents itself in the United States:

Wherever I saw woman crushing man by her accidental or imaginary superiority, I found physical sterility, moral disturbances, social anarchy.

Wherever I saw man refining himself by learning, culture, sustaining the superiority which God and nature have given him, I saw between the sexes a harmony unknown elsewhere, — a promise for the country of grandeur unlimited.

Chapter XX

WHAT IS TO BE DONE ABOUT IT?

FOR the last three days I have been at sea. The vessel's prow is now turned toward France. The murmur of *adieux* has died away. Beyond the sight of land, in this solitude which gives even the most recent souvenirs a tinge of the past, I am collecting my thoughts.

My final vision of New York was of a grandeur I can never forget. A haze, a summer haze, white and golden, rose from the water. It enveloped the lower part of the city. It changed into fantastic outlines the stupefying piles of the Washington Life, the World Building, the American Surety, the National Bank, the Manhattan Standard Oil. . . . For a moment it appeared like the vision of a mediæval town, the capital and citadel of the modern feodality of

money. Its proportions outdid in magnitude the fantasies of Gustave Doré.

The mists on the Hudson softened the sharpest outlines, toned down the most vivid colours. Distance does the same for my mind. The details to which one attaches too much importance on close observation resume their natural proportions. The final impression grows clearer, more definite.

I can sum it up in a line: Love and Business do not live on cordial terms in the United States. The amazing commercial prosperity has no sentimental life as corollary. According to the old proverb, "All the money in the world cannot make people happy."

Every race that has, up to the present time, followed the course of evolution upon Earth, seeks its happiness through the harmonious intercourse between man and woman in the domain of sentiment. It is an ideal that holds something of the divine in it; no people, no civilisation, has entirely attained it; they have come more or less near it, they have remained more or less

far from it. Love's very worst enemy in the world is pride. Question any one who has been in love; he will answer you:

"I recognised that the sentiment possessing me was love, not desire, nor passion, nor friendship, because of the humility that suddenly invaded my being. I lost the sort of assurance that comes when, without being over-vain, one realises one's superiority. Before the loved one I felt the same submissive obedience a subject feels before his sovereign."

This humility is disappearing from the heart of the American woman. It is replaced by a pride in book learning which it is time to cry down, since it prevents the woman from fulfilling her natural destiny and makes her the intellectual and economic rival of man. It is not a matter of chance that in the scale of "capital" sins, the Christian theologians have first of all placed pride. Without hesitation they call it worse than avarice, worse than lust. They affirm that it includes the essence and the possibility of all the other sins. They recall to our

minds the two ancient myths who show forth the bad angels driven from heaven, the man and the woman banished from the Earthly Paradise, to atone for the sin of pride. The fruit of the Tree of Knowledge of Good and Evil is, they say, dangerous for man. Adam, even though his head be sound, should touch of it but cautiously. The woman may not taste it without being carried away, without overstepping at once the confines of her sex.

After pride, the passion for luxury is another dangerous enemy to love in the United States. In many cases it kills a spontaneous sentiment at its birth. The young man does not dare tell a girl that he loves her, because he thinks:

"I have no right, loving her as I do, to deprive her of the luxury another man might give her—"

Often it is the girl herself who makes the conditions. She says to her suitor:

"You please me, but you do not make enough money. I will marry you when you are earning so much a year."

Of course this feeling should not be condemned unless carried to excess. When it means a true understanding of life's responsibilities, the fear of seeing an honest man embarrassed by business difficulties, it should be called "foresight." It is in this case a virtue. Foresight implies a spirit of sacrifice. I do not see on the other hand any honourable name that can be given to this eagerness for money when it is no longer a question of the necessary, but of the superfluous; when in the desire for the superfluous one sees women condemning their husbands to hard labour, which exhausts them or kills them; when one sees that all the joys of intimacy between husband and wife are sacrificed to this passion. Luxury, child of the senses and of vanity, is the contaminator of Love. . . .

The American man lives and grows up ignorant of woman. This ignorance in turn is a serious obstacle to love. It can be defined in a word: familiarity without mystery. In this respect the results of co-education are deplorable. Before the moment when his

senses are awakened, the American boy has already become accustomed to living side by side with the young girl who will some day be his wife. From this intimacy during childhood he keeps a distracting impression that the woman is the man's intellectual superior, that he must not venture into a discussion with her, that the wisest thing is to give over to her the management of everything except business, that is to say, the direction of the household, the education of the children, the social obligations, etc.

As to the "nature" of woman, the American man knows nothing. He ignores the fact that the American woman, in spite of her higher education, has remained a creature of instinct far more than he. He does not realise that the same things do not awaken love in the man and in the woman, that the man's feeling is more physical, the woman's more moral: he does not suspect that, even though the woman show a constant desire to rule, in love she only becomes attached to a force which masters her. The

sentimental education of the husband over the sea is as rudimentary as his classic learning. He is in a great measure responsible for the passion for luxury so pronounced in his companion. He finds it more convenient to give her money than to bother about the development of his heart and his mind. One moment he seems to think that love is the natural expression of gratitude, the next moment he seems to be purchasing his pleasure and his rest with the liberal generosity of a lord mayor.

It was only to be expected that women, refined and cultured, would grow weary of being treated with such sumptuous indifference. The rebellion has naturally broken out among those who were witnesses to the amiability of the man without getting any profit out of it. The persons of the "third sex" have hoisted the flag of insurrection: they have no one to pay their dressmakers' bills, their journeys hither and thither, their amusements, and, on the other hand, they have educated themselves too highly to submit in marriage to the control of a man

their intellectual inferior. A second War of Rebellion is threatening. It is no longer the North marching against the South, it is the woman marching against man. It is no longer a question of freeing the black man from the white man's oppression, but of emancipating woman from her economic dependence on man.

"We have had enough of being his housekeeper, the nurse for his children, the slave of his desires. We women should no longer submit to being economically dependent on our husbands. We should freely seek our own happiness."

The American women certainly have a right to happiness. It is what we are all in pursuit of; but it is neither in economic dependence, nor in economic independence, that she will find what she is looking for: happiness is not at the mercy of economic questions. Its source is higher, based upon moral, not material, reasons. One can define it, in marriage, as a true and lasting harmony between two beings who have first placed themselves in harmony with their

own particular destinies. If the American man be only partly in harmony with his destiny as a man, the American woman is still less in harmony with her destiny as a wife and a mother.

It is inevitable under these circumstances that the two halves of humanity, feebly impelled one toward the other by a physical attraction which is becoming more and more icy, do not get on together when they meet. The shock sends them immediately in opposite directions. If the direction given in the United States to the education of the man and the woman is not modified, this aversion which the sexes are beginning to show for each other will not diminish, it will increase.

Who will start the reform?

The man or the woman?

The woman, because, temporarily, she is the most cultivated; she has, so to speak, in her power the instruction of both sexes. It is not the first time in the history of civilisation that we have seen the woman triumph for a moment over man in intellectual learning.

The literary history of French society in the beginning of the seventeenth century presents the same anomaly. The happy use which the Frenchwoman made of this short-lived superiority might be studied with profit by the American women.

I refer to the years of social and political disorganisation which followed the wars of the Fronde. For over a hundred years man had not ceased fighting. Out of the orgy of the Renaissance, the frenzy of the religious wars, he sprang booted and spurred, with the manners, the language and the soul of a soldier. He fancied himself for ever taking a town by storm. He looked upon woman as the reward offered to the victor. In any event, he was more ready to use force than to show consideration toward her.

The women of France recollected the refinements of chivalry. Admitting that the Renaissance had for a moment intoxicated them, too, with its pagan spirit, they were the first to recover themselves. Inwardly they were unchanged. They had the same liking as always for small attentions which,

to please a woman, must accompany love at its start and in its full development. So they decided to make the man adopt the customs that appealed to them. They agreed that they would keep him out of their hearts and their intimacy until the day when he had learned to treat them as they demanded he should.

This was the movement of the "*Précieuses*," who were simply *Précieuses* before they became *Précieuses Ridicules*. We all know Molière's caricature of the *Précieuse Ridicule*, whether she be Cathos or Madelon.

The persons of the "third sex" who appear to my mind like the *Précieuses Ridicules* of the United States will read with profit this little sketch of the *Vraie Précieuse* which we owe to Mademoiselle de Scudéry.

She is speaking of the famous Marquise de Rambouillet, who had the first salon in France, where Corneille read his verses, the first historic salon, which exercised such a fortunate influence over the literary culture of its day.

"The Marquise de Rambouillet speaks divers languages and ignores nothing that is worth knowing, but she knows without seeming to know. She is so modest, one would say, to hear her talk, that she had only a common-sense knowledge of the world to draw from. No one ever had such a refined appreciation of the beautiful masterpieces in prose and in verse. She judges them with marvellous justice, never forgetting what becomes her sex, though she is far superior to it. There is nobody at Court with any merit who does not go to her house."

The virtuous and clever women, who frequented the salon of Madame de Rambouillet and of others clustered around hers like alveoles round a hive, thought it necessary to begin by teaching the men how to express themselves.

With this end in view they examined, one after the other, all the words in the French language. They verified their origin. They weighed and pondered them. They gave them a place of importance in polite conver-

sation, or they cast them out for valets and soldiers.

When this vocabulary of words, so choice, so elegant, so elastic, wherein they wished the masculine mind to be versed before presenting itself to them, was established, they began to attack the expression of ideas, or, to be more exact, of feelings — for the Frenchwoman has never been foolish enough to impose herself upon man in the domain of ideas. As a revenge she has made bold to reign over the world of sentiments. There she has laid down the laws, insisted upon the adoption of her wishes, her subtle appreciations. She has made clear to man that she does not want him to court her with serenades, as in Spain, nor with brusque manners as on the battlefield, nor with inexplicable silences, as in the North. She exacted that the man who said he loved her should explain the promptings of his love. She desired him to question her, to answer her, to try and lay aside his masculine nature and enter into her feminine ways of feeling. She wanted him to realise that a woman's heart

cannot be won once for all, but that love, like all living things, is in a perpetual state of evolution, that its form changes continually — like the ocean's surface — that it diminishes when it does not increase.

Man having showed a preliminary tendency to rebel against these legitimate aspirations, they made him pay for it.

Before the days of the "third sex" in America, the *Précieuse* in France, during the seventeenth century, greeted with unfailing chilliness the sentimental ignorance of man, his insufficient learning. In a country where marriage was obligatory for women, they prolonged as far as possible, sometimes to the end of their days, the scornful superiority of their single blessedness. Mademoiselle de Scudéry never married; Julie d'Etanges, the own daughter of the Marquise de Rambouillet, was almost forty when she decided to marry M. de Montausier, who had been waiting for her ten years.

It was not necessary, during the second half of the seventeenth century, to maintain for long such strict measures as the women

had taken with regard to the men. The men gave in. They learned to express their feelings with all the delicacy the women demanded. They found out that love, thus practised, became the most unselfish act in the world, the most religious, the most poetic, the most delicious. Under this influence one sees the most civilised, the most worldly society, that has ever existed. It united every sort of literary talent with a force, a grace, a variety, an exuberance which have not been equalled.

You can see the point I am going to make. Already in these pages I have mentioned that the modern battle of business resembles in more than one respect the battles which ages ago were man's daily exercise. The American youth who is in a hurry to shut up his books and fling himself into the midst of the fight, to give and receive handcuffs, to try for success at the risk of his life, resembles in more ways than one the French youth in the days of Henri IV. or Louis XIII., who had more liking for swords, pistols, escapades and the storming of cities,

than for the study of grammar, Latin and theology.

This life among men in the confusion of a fierce struggle has generated, now as then, the same consequences: the habit man acquires of deciding everything by action makes him impatient and astonished at the love of speculation, the leaning toward reverie, the romantic sentimentality which is the very soul of the woman.

It makes little difference whether the final attitude of man before this femininity, against which he comes up short, be brutal or timid; in neither violence nor fear do woman and love find their due.

The Frenchwoman of the seventeenth century would not suffer a man to speak impolitely to her. The twentieth-century American woman frets because the men don't talk to her at all! It is she who has made the man timid, mistrustful of himself. It is to the American woman that the task falls of bringing up a generation of men who will not be only business men, but lovers, husbands, fathers.

It is worth devoting oneself to this effort. I address myself to the young, recently married woman who is grieved at not finding in her husband — however devoted he may be — the companion she expected, to share her thoughts and her feelings with her. Already she is tormented by the first symptoms of restlessness. She does not need to go to club meetings to find the remedy for her soul weariness. She can find something better to do in her home, where her children, her sons, her daughters, are growing up in the care of hired companions and tutors. It does not suffice to see that her daughter is warm enough, properly fed, that all her needs are provided for. The initial truth is that the spirit of sacrifice, the control of selfishness, constitute the foundations of a happy life.

It is a lesson never taught too soon. It is on her mother's knee, in the daily heart to heart intimacy, when the mother asks questions, and waits for her answer, when she advises, without scolding, when she stimulates, without proposing a reward,

that the child's soul is formed. On the day of his birth the actual bond which held the son to the mother was broken; it must be replaced by a moral bond. It is not his sister, nor his little playfellows, nor the friends he makes later at school, nor the men and women who teach him, nor the business men against whom he clashes in the fight for money, who will start flowing in the boy's heart the fountain of love. It should not be allowed to remain a hidden force. It must come bubbling up at the surface to reflect the smiling landscape, the beautiful sky. The child who has learned at its mother's knee to put into words the tenderness it feels, to express the agitation in its heart, will not be so impatient to rush into the battle which cut short in its father all taste for culture. The progress he will have made in the knowledge of his heart will lead him to desire the perfecting of his mind. Thus trained, he will gain in true force all that he loses in instinctive violence. He will know how to give business and love each their due. And, when the time

comes, he will show his wife all the delicacy of sentiment which the mother showered upon him at the outset of his life.

The Spanish have expressed the truth regarding these sentiments in a popular song which is a program in itself of sentimental education.

The lover says to the one he loves: "I keep in my heart two kisses that never leave me; the last my mother gave me, the first one I gave you."

As to the little girl, if I were an American mother, I would bring her up from the beginning of her charming existence to believe that, even less than man, should woman live for herself. I would persuade her that the love she inspires is not a debt toward her, but a favour; that she must deserve it; that she must some day pour out upon others the treasure she has received. I would not wish this child to go on thinking that the effort of the father is a natural thing. I would have her witness and understand her father's devotion, his weariness. I would not wait until my daughter were

grown up before sending her to a cooking school to learn domestic science. It is not at a school, but at home, that such things can best be taught, where they seem more like a virtue than a duty. I would propose to the child, as a reward for her good intentions, a happy recompense of her effort, that she make with her own hands some favourite dish for her father. I would not say, "Such things are childish." Nothing is childish which takes us from the contemplation of self, and offers us the happiness of others as an object.

When the time came to send my daughter to school I would not allow her to choose her friends without my approval. I would follow her studies, and with my knowledge of life watch over the development of her mind. It is useless to go and speak before a club meeting on educational reforms, if one does not superintend the education of one's own children in one's own home.

If, once her studies completed, my daughter had a desire to carry her education farther, I would not send her to college. The girls'

colleges play the same part in American society that the convent did in France during the seventeenth century. Their success testifies to the impossibility wherein the family finds itself of finishing the education of its own children. During the seventeenth century in France, the mothers were so worldly they had not sufficient leisure to occupy themselves with their daughters. In the United States at the beginning of the twentieth century the mothers do not feel worldly enough, they do not see about them a society sufficiently formed to trust that in it a girl could finish her education by intelligent, cultured conversation. In spite of everything, one who follows with affection all that goes on in America can only repeat with certain modifications the saying of Père La Chaise at the close of Louis XIV.'s reign: "You will always have plenty of nuns; you will never have enough mothers." The Convent of the old *régime* had a tendency to make nuns of the girls sent to be educated in it. The American college has a tendency toward making women of the

"third sex," at least *femmes savantes*, out of the charming girls who attend it. The college was founded to educate teachers. Let this be its end and aim. Don't let your hearts be touched by the exclamation of the young girls: "But we are so happy at college! Happier than we are at home; . . . we can never be so happy again . . . later in life!" What is the use of being great-grand-daughters of Puritans if one professes this strange belief that we have been created and put upon earth to seek our own happiness as aim and end? It is moreover painful to hear a young girl say that between childhood and marriage there is a place where she is happier than in the home of her parents. It is college which gives them this taste for an independent life detached from the family, whose memory will haunt them like a too dear phantom when the hour comes for them in turn to found a family.

The American mother and daughter, from the day the girl is fourteen or fifteen until her marriage, should live in the strictest

intimacy. It is in this way only that the girl will learn the art of becoming a capable woman, preoccupied with her husband's happiness, and a mother, proud of the greatest of all tasks, that of forming the heart and the soul of a being to whom one has already given life in the flesh. To misconstrue such joys as these, to seek others never to be attained, is to go contrary to divine purpose, contrary to natural instincts, and, by failing in one's duty, to let slip one's happiness.

Don't say, "This man is trying to replace our standard by one of his own, our training by his. . . ." I am of the opinion that our Latin-Catholic civilisation has sacrificed too completely the individual to the family, the child to its parents. It alarms me to see my country people asking themselves whether the remedy for this excess would not be to emancipate the individual from the family and sacrifice him to the State. As far as our young men are concerned, I believe they have important lessons to learn from the honour paid to individual initiative in the

United States. I never grow weary of advising the French boys who have finished their education to cross the sea, to go and study for themselves the miracles brought about by individual effort in the United States.

But at the same time that I bemoan the too great sacrifice in France of the individual to the family, I am certain that, in the United States, the family is too much sacrificed to the individual. The family, one might almost say, does not exist. Each generation is without any bond of affection or respect for the generation that preceded it. And again, in the very generation that should go hand in hand from the cradle to the grave, the male and the female fail to understand each other.

They cannot be reconciled on the ground of the woman's learning and the man's ignorance. And even if the peculiar conditions of life have brought about momentarily a superior culture among the women, the American woman should make use of it as our nobility did long ago during the night

of August 4th, 1789. She must of her own free will abandon her privilege. By renouncing the idea of further progress on the road of intellectual speculation, in order to apply herself more to domestic science, she will have accomplished half of her duty; of the other half she will acquit herself by saying to man:

"Don't think you need be always at business in order to give me more money; I want not only a banker, but a companion. Take time to study and read, to have general ideas, to know what you like and why you like it. Get yourself ready to assume the direction you have left to me in family and civil matters." The inward peace, the happiness that one always finds by giving happiness to others, the certainty that one is submitting to divine and natural laws, would repay the American woman at once for so fine a sacrifice.

Several years ago I was present in the Kremlin Chapel, Moscow, at the coronation of the Russian Emperor. After he had lifted the Host from the altar with his own

hands, in order to show that there is no intermediary between him and God, he took the crown and placed it on his head, to show in the same way that there is no intermediary between him and his people. Then the Empress, dressed in white as on her wedding day, advanced. She kneels before the Emperor already crowned — he leans toward her, and with the crown which binds his temples, he touches her forehead. By this contact she is created Empress. It is as though he said to her:

"Eve was made from one of Adam's ribs. It is from my crown that you have sprung. From this day forth you are the emanation of my thought . . . my thought itself!"

This symbolic ceremony is only an illustration of the words which Saint Paul spoke to the Corinthians, saying:

"The head of the woman is man; and the head of the man is Christ."

For all men and for all women, through all time, and all the world over, this is an eternal truth. It assigns to both their

proper rôles. It gives love its true value. Praying at the foot of the Cross, you have the mother and the Madeleine. Their heart-broken love sustains the martyr. He lifts his face heavenward.